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French defence minister due here today

AMMAN (J.T.) — French Defence Minister Charles Millon arrives here today on a two-day official visit to Jordan during which he will hold talks with senior Jordanian officials on issues of common interest, the French embassy said. The talks will focus on enhancing bilateral military cooperation and the possibility of holding joint Jordanian-French military exercises. Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the French minister will sign a military cooperation agreement, under which France will extend military assistance to the Kingdom. The visit by Mr. Millon is the 6th by a senior French official to Jordan in two months.

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King today opens third regular session of 12th Parliament

By Sa'eda Kilani
 Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein today opens the third session of the 12th Parliament with a speech from the throne that is expected to spell out the government policies for the next year amid a growing controversy over press freedoms and the role of the opposition.

The King, who had repeatedly in the past few months expressed dissatisfaction over work of professional associations and the press in general, is expected to address these two issues which the government will push to the top of the House agenda.

In a speech made before army and intelligence officers last month the King called on the associations to leave politics for professional matters. The King, who made the speech shortly after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated, called on the silent majority to come out and express its support for peace. He instructed the government to ask the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution to rule on the legality of the powers practised by the associations.

Following the King's speech, the government said it will introduce amendments to the press

and publications law. The amendments are expected to impose more restrictions on newspapers, especially on weeklies.

Informed sources say the proposed amendments to the Press and Publications Law would include an imprisonment of three months to three years in addition to the maximum fine in the current law of JD 1000 for violating the law's articles.

The proposed amendments, according to the sources, are also expected to give the government the power to close down newspapers and demand that chief editors be serving members of the Jordanian Press Association (JPA)

for at least seven years.

"There is an intention to impose more restrictions. But these amendments are not final," said Suleiman Qudah, JPA president. "These are only thoughts but not the final version."

The JPA will hold a session on Sunday to discuss the proposed amendments, but sources say that there are differences within the government itself over the amendments.

The first item on the House agenda, however, is the 1996 budget.

The state budget, whose detailed figures were not released so far, is expected to reflect a lowering of subsidies and a rise of JD 10 in each civil servant salary as of May 1, two items that

are expected to draw lots of criticism from deputies.

The election law is also expected to come up during the session. The present one-person, one-vote law introduced in November 1993 is still a temporary one. Last year, 27 deputies demanded that the government introduce a new law.

Following the King's speech today, the Senate will convene under the chairmanship of Ahmad Lawzi and will elect a committee to prepare the reply to the speech. It will also elect members of the Senate's permanent bureau, two assistants and the different committees.

The Lower House will then hold its first session

under the chairmanship of the oldest serving member. Elections for the speakership as well as two vice-presidents and two assistants will take place. The House will also elect various committees.

Two deputies vying for the speakership post — incumbent Speaker Sa'ad Havel Srour and Islamic Action Front Deputy Abdullah Akaileh. Although observers believe the battle has been settled in favour of Mr. Srour, the Front insists on going ahead with the nomination of Dr. Akaileh.

The Front, which expressed its dissatisfaction over what it described as attempts aiming at alienating its members from

assuming any post at the House's permanent bureau, said it insists on fielding its candidates regardless of the results.

Abdul Rahim Ekour will be the Front's candidate for the vice-presidency seat, which is contested by two other deputies: Centrist Abdul Baqi Jammo from the National Action Front that is led by Al Ahd party, and leftist Deputy Mustafa Shneikat.

The competition for the seat is very strong. Negotiations among the different blocs will continue this morning in order to reach a compromise to fill all the posts of the permanent bureau to the satisfaction of all different political trends.



Amal Touqan passes away

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Friday mourned the death of Amal Touqan, a former foreign minister and ambassador to Lebanon. Mr. Touqan died in Beirut Friday morning.

Israeli shelling wounds 3 civilians

IDON (AFP) — Israeli shelling of South Lebanon wounded three people on the outskirts of the town of Nabatieh, security services said Friday. Two women aged 25 and 20 and a male doctor were lightly hurt in the bombardment by artillery posted in the occupied order "security zone" late Thursday. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded in Hizbollah attack in the occupied "security zone" along the border on Thursday, triggering Israeli air raids and artillery bombardments in retaliation. Warplanes continued to fly sorties over the region through the night.

Argentina arrests dozen Jewish attack

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Argentine authorities on Friday arrested about a dozen people, including several soldiers, in connection with the 1994 attack on a Jewish cultural centre that killed 86 people, the state news agency said. Quoting unidentified judicial and police sources, Telam said federal Judge Juan Jose Galeano, in charge of the probe into the car-bomb attack, ordered raids on Argentina's largest military base and other, undisclosed locations. No further details were immediately available. The Campo Mayo barracks in the outskirts of Buenos Aires is the largest military base in Argentina. Although many arrests were made in the past in connection with the attack on the Jewish centre, suspects were later released on charges dropped.

Russia takes over Security Council chair

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Russia took over the rotating chairmanship Friday of the U.N. Security Council, replacing the Sultanate of Oman. Russia's permanent representative here, Sergei Lavrov, will preside over meetings of the 5-member Security Council for the month of December.

Deal could stop if PLO does not curb militants, alter its charter — Peres

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres said in an interview published on Friday the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace "train" could stop if PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat did not curb militants and delete parts of the PLO charter mandating Israel's destruction.

Mr. Peres' remarks came as PLO officials said Israel had lifted a one-day freeze on its handover of six West Bank towns imposed after a brief kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers in the Jenin West Bank self-rule enclave.

Chief PLO negotiator Ahmad Qouriea said Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat would meet next week but a date had yet to be confirmed. After the assassination of his predecessor Yitzhak Rabin by a Jew in November, Mr. Peres vowed to implement deals on expanding West Bank Palestinian self-rule he crafted with Mr. Rabin.

But he was quoted by Israel's Maariv mass circulation daily as saying: "I intend to take all these steps, if of course the Palestinians will take theirs. That is to say,

they will fight terror and cancel the clauses in the Palestinian charter."

If the PLO did not keep its commitments, Mr. Peres said: "The train will be stopped."

The PLO-Israel accord on expanding West Bank self-rule signed in September said the Palestinians would make the charter changes two months after elections, expected in January.

Mr. Peres said peace moves outstanding after elections would be Hebron rede-

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Opposition virtually eliminated in Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — President Hosni Mubarak's party headed for a sweeping victory on Friday in parliamentary elections, virtually eliminating the opposition amid widespread charges of vote-rigging.

Interior Minister General Hassan Al Ali, announcing the official results in 439 of the 444 contests, said opposition parties won no seats in the first round of balloting, contradicting earlier results showing two victories.

General Ali said the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) won 123 seats in the People's Assembly and 13 went to independents — mainly NDP dissidents expected to rejoin the party — while the rest would go to a second round of voting.

The NDP, in power since it was founded in 1978, was widely expected to secure the two-thirds majority necessary to elect the president in the

Dec. 6 run-offs in seats where no candidate won at least half the vote.

Political analysts said the opposition, which boycotted the last parliamentary elections in 1990, could expect to win no more than about 30 seats, its weakest showing since the early 1980s.

In 1984, it won 80 seats and in 1987 had more than 100 deputies sitting in the chamber. Despite Gen. Ali's assertion of a whitewash, earlier results showed that two opposition candidates were elected, one from the left-wing Nasserist Party and the other from the liberal Wafd Party.

The government was unable to explain the contradiction.

Gen. Ali said there would be a second round of voting next Wednesday in 167 constituencies where no clear winners emerged.

"Results for first round of elections confirm the credibility of (Egypt's) political leadership and the commitment of the Interior Ministry to administer honest elections which reflect the will of the Egyptian voter," Gen. Ali told a news conference.

Opposition parties have reported widespread abuses including mass arrests of election agents, ballot box stuffing and violence and intimidation.

The interior minister said 606 candidates would contest 303 seats in the second round. They comprised 317 independents, 248 from the NDP, and 41 from the opposition.

Gen. Ali said the turnout was 50 per cent of the 21 million electorate. In 1990 the government said 40 per cent of voters took part in the election but independent

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NATO signals Bosnia operation; French general slams peace deal

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — The first elements of a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) peace force will start arriving in Bosnia this weekend after alliance ambassadors agreed to the deployment of a 2,600-strong advance party to prepare the way for the arrival of the main force.

The first group to arrive will be 56 British soldiers from the 7th Signal Regiment, who fly out from RAF Bruggen on Monday morning, a spokesman for the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) at Rheindahlen, Germany said. Some individuals will be flying out over the weekend, he added.

ARRC is to provide up to 200 staff to an enabling force that will be charged with setting up communications and

other infrastructure to enable the main NATO force of 60,000 troops, backed up by an estimated 40,000 support staff, to deploy speedily once a definitive peace accord is signed.

The bulk of the force will be split evenly between headquarters in Zagreb, capital of Croatia, and Sarajevo. U.S. troops will account for the bulk of the force with 700 in Bosnia, and 2,000 in total. Britain is the next biggest contributor with around 350.

NATO has calculated that it will take between seven and nine days for the enabling force to set up the infrastructure required for deployment of the main force.

The first troops from the enabling force will begin tasks like measuring airfields, setting up communications

links and setting up headquarters.

NATO ambassadors were due later Friday or Monday to give provisional approval to the operational plan for the deployment of the main force, which will only be triggered once the warring parties have signed a definitive peace agreement in Paris on Dec. 14.

The United States was keen to have the plan approved before President Bill Clinton visits U.S. troops assigned to the force in Germany on Saturday.

Once the peace accords are signed, NATO will take over from the United Nations within four days. NATO's supreme commander in Europe, General George

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King Fahd said well after check-up

RIYADH (Agencies) — King Fahd, who has been undergoing what officials termed a regular medical check-up, is well and may leave hospital Saturday, hospital sources said Friday.

The sources reiterated a royal court statement Thursday that the results of tests he has undergone were "reassuring."

But they did not elaborate, or indicate why the unspecified tests were considered reassuring.

King Fahd, 73, was hospitalised Thursday for what officials said was a routine check-up.

Diplomatic sources said the chain-smoking monarch, who is diabetic and overweight, was suffering a bout of arthritis, a frequent complaint.

For years, King Fahd has had difficulty walking, and there has been speculation that he needs surgery for kneecap replacement.

King Fahd, ruler of the world's richest oil producer and guardian of the two Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina, is due to head Riyadh's delegation to the

annual summit of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which Saudi Arabia leads, scheduled to begin in Muscat on Monday.

Jordanian officials, speaking before the king went into hospital, said he was expected to receive King Hussein early this month for their first meeting since the Gulf crisis sparked by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The royal court in Riyadh said in a brief bulletin late on Thursday: "We are pleased to announce that all the check-ups conducted this morning on the custodian of the two holy shrines are reassuring and thank God he is enjoying health and fitness."

The news was reported by Saudi state radio and television, the official Saudi Press Agency, and on the front pages of Saudi newspapers without further details.

Rumours of King Fahd's illness regularly circulate on international oil markets but little is publicly known about his health.

King Fahd was admitted to the King Faisal Specialist Hospital, the kingdom's most advanced, "to undergo some

Saudi leader tells King Hussein he is doing well

KING FAHD of Saudi Arabia told King Hussein on Friday he was in good health, Saudi state television reported. "I received your cable and I thank you for your kind feelings after the medical tests that were performed on us and which were, thank God, reassuring," the television quoted King Fahd as telling King Hussein in a cable. "I ask God Almighty to maintain health for all of us."

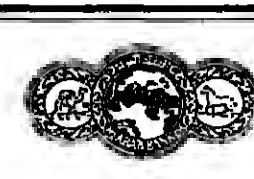
King Hussein had sent a cable to King Fahd congratulating him on his recovery and wishing him continuing good health and happiness. In his cable the King said: "No sooner had I arrived back home until I received with happiness the good news about the reassuring medical examination results which Your Majesty underwent."

King Hussein and Queen Noor returned home Thursday from London after a several day working visit to the United Kingdom.

ordinary medical check-ups," the royal court announced earlier on Thursday. He had just spent a few days in the desert. Neither of the two bulletins issued disclosed whether the king was actually ill.

He was last shown on Saudi television earlier this week sitting in a huge salon and surrounded by senior Muslim clerics. He sipped from a cup and had a large walking stick.

Sources in Riyadh said Thursday's second bulletin came as a relief to Saudis who were kept wondering for more than 12 hours about the king's health in the absence to fresh news.


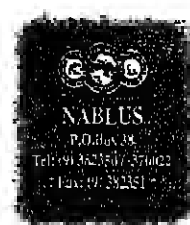







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Iraq affirms it is keen on normal ties with Jordan

BAGHDAD (AP) — A senior Iraqi official Thursday stressed his country's keen interest in maintaining normal Jordanian-Iraqi relations, saying that his country "views such relations as normal."

In a statement to the press following the conclusion of the Al Mirbad poetry festival, Minister of Culture and Information Yusef Hummadi said: Iraq will never "offend Jordan," emphasizing his country's interest to further develop the positive bilateral relations.

He said his country recognizes the new Palestinian passports issued by the Palestinian National Authority (PNC).

He expected the U.N.-imposed sanctions on his country to be lifted within six months, noting that Iraq had achieved significant progress on meeting the U.N. conditions for easing or lifting the sanctions. However, he said, he cannot give a specific date for lifting such sanctions. "It

is difficult to delve into details of this subject, or to talk about Iraq's plans to address the situation should the sanctions continue," he said.

Mr. Hummadi said Iraq had already met most of the requirements for easing the sanctions, noting that little is left to be addressed by the Iraqi government in the forthcoming period.

Mr. Hummadi belittled the importance of the statements made by Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. commission in charge of dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and other international parties, that sanctions will not be lifted.

"Such statements are media-oriented and do not reflect the progress made by Iraq to ensure the lifting of the sanctions," he said. The Iraqi official noted that Ekeus was being subjected to political pressures by "some parties" to maintain the sanctions against Iraq, adding that the United States was seeking to maintain the sanc-

tions on Iraq.

On his country's relations with Iran, Mr. Hummadi said normalisation of relations with Iran depends on settlement of such issues as prisoners of war and Iraqi planes. There are 20,000 Iraqis in Iranian jails, in addition to 142 planes, including 26 passenger aircraft that were sent to Iran during the Gulf war, he said.

He stressed his country's interest in normalising relations with Iran, saying that his country had embarked on the first steps in this direction. He voiced hope that the forthcoming visit to Iraq by the Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will contribute to the normalisation of such relations.

On the peace process, Mr. Hummadi said his country has no plans to participate in it, adding that Iraq was not a party to the settlement and had no occupied territories, and therefore it did not have any intentions to initiate talks with Israel.

Acquitted Turkish author vows struggle for true democracy

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Turkish writer Yasar Kemal was acquitted Friday on charges of spreading Kurdish "separatist propaganda" and pledged to continue his struggle for true democracy in Turkey.

Mr. Kemal, 72, considered by many as Turkey's best living novelist, had been accused of spreading propaganda for saying "the Turkish government oppresses the country's Kurds" in an article written for the German magazine Der Spiegel late last year.

Judges at Istanbul's state security court however decided that the article did not constitute a crime as it "contained no elements of separatism."

"I wish all those being tried for 'crimes of opinion' be acquitted like me," Mr. Kemal said reporters after the trial. "The fact that some people are tried for their opinions doesn't fit today's Turkey, the Turkish people deserve a true democracy."

"My struggle will continue until nobody any more comes before the judges for a crime of opinion," he added.

Mr. Kemal, who is partially of Kurdish origin, was in-

dicted on Jan. 24 and his trial began on May 5.

He was charged under the controversial article 8 of the country's anti-terrorism law, punishing "separatist propaganda," which was mainly directed against an armed Kurdish uprising in south-eastern Turkey.

His acquittal coincides with intensive efforts by Turkey to enter into a lucrative custom's union with the European Union (EU).

The European Parliament, the EU's legislative body, which is due to vote on the deal on December 13, has been pressing for more democracy as a pre-condition for the union.

Ankara has taken a number of steps to improve its human rights record, including amendments to article 8, which eventually led to Mr. Kemal's acquittal. More than 100 other people convicted or being tried under article 8 have also been released since late October, although hundreds of others are still in prison for non-violent crimes concerned with the Kurdish issue.

Turkey has also amended its constitution, but it has failed to comply with another

demand to release all eight Kurdish deputies jailed last year for having links with the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which is waging a separatist war in the south-east.

It freed four of them, but sentenced the remaining four to 15-year prison terms. Those convicted included Leyla Zana, 34, who was given this year's Shakhavard award by the European Parliament.

Over 21,000 people have been killed since 1984 when the PKK launched its armed campaign.

However, Mr. Kemal's acquittal will come as good news for those hoping for a "yes" vote on the customs deal on Dec. 13.

"A prison sentence for Yasar Kemal would be a disaster for Turkey. Such a move would close all the doors for rapprochement with Europe," a Western analyst here had said.

Mr. Kemal's best known novel is "Memmed, My Hawk", which has been translated into more than 10 languages, in which he depicts a feudal scene in southern Anatolia.



MURDER SUSPECT: Residents of the Beit El settlement in the occupied West Bank give a hero's welcome to Margalit Har-Shefi, a 20-year-old student and resident of the settlement, who was released from custody on Friday and placed under a seven-day house arrest. Har-Shefi is one of the suspects in an alleged conspiracy that led to the Nov. 4 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (AFP photo)

U.S. congratulates Algerian people on polls, relieved by end to rocket attacks on Israel

WASHINGTON (USIA) — State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said the United States had congratulated the Algerian people "on having had an election in which up to, by some reports, 75 per cent of the people voted."

"It's an amazingly large turnout considering the pressures on many parts of Algerian society and the terrorism that has existed there. We hope as a result of the inauguration of President Zeroual that the government and the opposition forces can have a fruitful dialogue," Mr. Burns said.

On the recent Katyusha rocket attacks on Israel, Mr. Burns said: "We understand that the Katyusha rocket attacks into Israel have stopped. We have been in touch with all the parties to urge restraint and to urge them to reduce the violence. And we certainly will continue to monitor the situation very closely."

Asked how does the United States view the results of the Algerian election, Mr.

Burns said: "We congratulated the Algerian people on having had an election in which up to, by some reports, 75 per cent of the people voted. It's an amazingly large turnout considering the pressures on many parts of Algerian society and the terrorism that has existed there. We hope as a result of the inauguration of President Zeroual that the government and the opposition forces can have a fruitful dialogue. We hope that the Algerian people can achieve peace and stability in their life. They have lived under terrible, terrible pressure with too much bloodshed for too many years."

Asked whether the United States government recognised Mr. Zeroual's legitimacy as president, Mr. Burns said: "Well, we have diplomatic relations with the government of Algeria. We have an embassy there. We have a relationship with the government. Of course, you know, we recognise the gov-

ernment. We recognise the election. We certainly recognise him as president of Algeria, yes."

In the Lebanese-Israeli front, Mr. Burns said: "Secretary of State Warren Christopher, following his 4:30 a.m. conversation on Tuesday with Syrian Foreign Minister Fawzi Al Sharaa, had two more conversations with him throughout Thursday."

"He also talked to Prime Minister Shimon Peres. And we understand that the Katyusha rocket attacks into Israel have stopped. We've been in touch with all the parties to urge restraint and to urge them to reduce the violence, and we certainly will continue to monitor the situation very closely."

Asked whether Israel had responded, Mr. Burns said: "We understand that — we have heard reports that the Israeli defence forces have responded with some retaliatory air strikes into southern Lebanon this morning, yes,

but there have been no further Katyusha rocket attacks."

"We're just glad that the rocket attacks have stopped. It's a very serious development that put a lot of lives in danger, and the secretary worked hard yesterday (Thursday) to put an end to that. We believe we had the cooperation of Israel and Syria to do that. We're very glad about that. It is true that this morning there have been some additional military incidents in southern Lebanon, unfortunately — well, that is part of the activity in southern Lebanon that has been going on for a long, long time there. I wouldn't relate them to yesterday's (Thursday's) attack."

Asked how much credit the U.S. would give to Syria for the fact these attacks have stopped, Mr. Burns said: "I would say that, you know, we believe that both Israel and Syria have acted to reduce the violence and have acted to impose a measure of restraint that will stop these Katyusha rocket attacks."

Amnesty welcomes Syria release of prisoners

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amnesty International has welcomed the release of at least hundreds of political prisoners — possibly more than 1,000 — including prisoners of conscience who have reportedly been released following an amnesty issued by the Syrian president earlier this month.

"By releasing these prisoners the Syrian government has taken a positive step towards improving its human rights situation," Amnesty International said in a press release sent to the Jordan Times. "We hope that this step will lead to the release of all prisoners of conscience and other political prisoners not charged with a recognisably criminal offence."

Amnesty said: "The release mark the anniversary of 25 years in power of President Hafez Al Assad. So far the releases include political

prisoners held in connection with various political organisations and foreign nationals held in different prisons.

"The majority of those released are said to be among those held in connection with membership of the Muslim Brotherhood. They also include doctors such as Ahmad Al Bairuti, a gynaecologist and member of the Syrian Doctors' Association, who had been in detention since November 1983.

"One recently released detainee who had been held in Sadnaya Prison near Damascus, told Amnesty International that on 19 November he and a group of 75 others were taken to meet the prison director who informed them that they had been granted a presidential amnesty and were about to be released. Six days later he was able to return home.

Gas project with Israel 5 years away, Qatar says

BEIRUT (AFP) — Qatar's project to sell gas to Israel is still five or six years down the road, after the Middle East peace process is well under way, Qatari Emir Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani said Friday.

"Five or six years will pass before it materialises," Sheikh Hamad said in an interview with the London-based Arabic "newspaper Al Hayat.

Israel last month signed a letter of intent with Enron to buy Qatari gas, and Doha has struck a similar deal with the same U.S. company.

"Even if everything goes well, this gas will not arrive on the market before the year 2000," said the Emir. "It's only natural that commercial relations be established between all the partners" in the Middle East peace process.

Holocaust survivors trapped in Israeli hospitals

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is searching for ways to help 900 Holocaust survivors who have been languishing in mental institutions for almost 50 years after fleeing Europe for a new life in the fledgling Jewish state.

Little attempt was made to treat those who experienced the horrors of the Nazi death camps when they arrived in Israel following their creation in 1948, three years after World War II.

It was easier to place them in psychiatric hospitals than to address their problems, said Knesset Deputy Dov Shilansky, himself a Holocaust survivor.

Since the revelations in a television documentary, he has called for an inquiry. "This is a mark of shame on the whole of Israeli society and there is an urgent need to examine how it came about," he said.

Some 900 people are still in institutions across the country, said AMCHA, a support group offering psychiatric

help to survivors and their children, quoting ministry of health figures.

The ministry has earmarked funds to build a number of hostels as a way of creating a better home environment for the elderly patients.

"This shocking thing is that this need not have happened," said Naomi Stople, an AMCHA spokeswoman. "These people could have led normal lives if they had been helped properly. They arrived displaying a clinical problem but it was never connected that they were Holocaust survivors."

"Now it is very difficult because after 50 years, people have become institutionalised."

Some 300,000 people who experienced at first hand the concentration camps still live in Israel, two-thirds above retirement age, said AMCHA Director John Lemberger.

He said many of those who arrived in Israel after it was

created in 1948 had had no relatives to care for them, and had been left traumatised.

But he doubted whether hostels were now the right answer to the plight of the hospitalised survivors.

"Hopefully it will create a more homelike atmosphere but they are being built in the back yards of psychiatric hospitals and will be totally dependent on them for services."

He said other survivors had offered to go and visit the hospitals, and there was a "need to train staff to be more sensitive to people as survivors and not just as mentally-ill patients."

Author Tom Segov who has published a book called "The Seventh Million" said the Holocaust survivors experienced great difficulties when they arrived in Israel.

"It was a big shock coming to this country, to find a society which was unable to listen to them and to understand their stories."

"Israel at the time was a future-orientated society, and everybody seemed to have silently agreed that it was better not to talk about what had happened. The Holocaust was like a deep family secret."

"People whispered about others, saying 'he or she was in the Holocaust,'" Mr. Segov said.

Mr. Lemberger said today the attitude towards the Holocaust had changed, and demand for AMCHA's help was growing.

"Twenty years or so ago, people were busy building the state and raising families. Now that they have retired it is natural that they review the past, and often they come bang up against a pain, trauma or some mourning or guilt that they had suppressed."

The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4 was a case in point and had evoked many painful feelings for survivors, he added.

U.S. has deep respect for Islam — Wilcox

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The charge that the United States has come to see Islam as an enemy is "entirely false," the State Department's counterterrorism coordinator said in an interview Nov. 29.

The United States has deep respect for Islam as one of the world's great religions," Ambassador Philip Wilcox stated. Islam is a religion of peace, he added, reflecting any affinity between Islam and terrorism.

Mr. Wilcox stressed that he saw no particular relation between Islam and terrorism. All the world's great faiths have seen their tenets distorted by terrorists at one time or another, he said, citing the growing threat from fanatics and religious extremists around the world who use and distort religion for their own messianic purposes.

At the same time, he pointed to a broad consensus forming the Arab World to condemn terrorism and support the Middle East peace process. Most Arabs and Israelis are united in their opposition to terrorism, he commented, noting the wave of revulsion which resulted from the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin at the hands of a Jewish extremist.

While groups like Hamas and Jihad have not renounced terrorism, they are fighting a rear guard action against the peace process and becoming more and more isolated in the process, Mr. Wilcox remarked.

Whereas 10-15 years ago, there were some who felt that extreme poverty and oppression could justify acts of terrorism, fewer and fewer make that claim now, he said. This he linked to a growing trend away from state-sponsored terrorism and the concerted efforts by the nations of the world to work together, share information and fight terrorism collectively. "No nation can do it on their own," he remarked.

Nonetheless, five Middle East governments remain on the list of nations which the United States has determined sponsor state terrorism: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria. The first four of these are countries with a history of political instability whose regimes ignore the rule of law and have evaded little interest in the economic and social development of their people, Mr. Wilcox commented. In such environments, violence and terrorism tend to thrive. That is the reason they are on the terrorism list, he said. U.S. concerns are not directed at the people of these nations, but at their governments, he stressed.

The case of Syria is somewhat different, Mr. Wilcox noted. "Syria has not engaged in acts of terrorism since the mid-80s." The reason they are on the U.S. list is because they continue to offer refuge to groups such as Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizbollah, the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and the PFLP-OC (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command), he said. The presence of these groups is a serious issue in the peace process, and one that the United States hopes very much can be resolved soon.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 ... Back to the Future
14:30 ... Harry and the Hendersons
15:00 ... Blue Heelers
15:30 ... Only in Hollywood
16:00 ... The Adventures of the Black Stallion

16:30 ... Sky Trackers
17:00 ... Children's Programme: Fractals
17:30 ... Magazine — Onscreen
18:00 ...

Drama — C'est Mon Histoire
19:00 ... Le Journal
19:15 ... Magazine — Fast Forward
19:30 ... News Headlines
19:35 ... Major Dad
20:00 ... The First Wives Club
20:25 ... The Bold and the Beautiful
21:10 ... Star Trek
22:00 ... News in English
22:25 ...

Feature Film: "The Boy Nobody Wanted"

23:50 ... L'Histoire Secrète De Petrole
00:30 ... My Good Friend

PRAYER TIMES

04:52 ... (Sunset) Doha
05:12 ... Doha
14:12 ... Asir
16:36 ... Maghreb
17:57 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 610740
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 632785.

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Transfiguration Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Assumption Church Tel. 652626.
Assumption Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Assumption Orthodox Church Tel. 772621.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Assumption International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate weather conditions are expected to prevail with temperatures southerly moderate. In Amman, winds will be southerly active and sea calm.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./Max. temp. 4/16
Amman 11/23
Agaba 11/23
Deserts 2/18
Jordan Valley 11/23

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 17, Agaba 23 Humidity
readings: Amman 38 per cent.
Agaba 28 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mubillah Masrah 820425
Dr. Salman Al Daboubi 776751
Dr. Khalid M'addi 743500
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi 894788
First pharmacy 661912
First pharmacy 637025
Nairosh pharmacy 623672
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsan pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

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HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 64281/6

Akshah Maternity, J. Amn 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsan 607071
Shamsan Hospital 669131
University Hospital 842848
Al-Hussein Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdal 66127/37
Al-Abid, Abdal 66164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Mar 89161/15
Queen Alia Hospital 622405/0
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
Bazez Cairo (EJ)
Zarga National Hospital (09)983323
Bazez Cairo (EJ)
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)900560
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (09)980732
Bazez Cairo (EJ)
Princess Basmah Hospital (02)25555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275
Al-Nafes Hospital (02)247100
Al-Nafes Hospital (03)314111

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

Electric Power Company 636381

Medical seminar emphasises human element in research data

AMMAN (J.T.) — In an effort to "humanise" scientific and medical seminars, organisers are adopting a new trend: highlighting the "human element" rather than just concentrating on the technical and scientific details of the topics, according to Oumeish Oumeish, medical adviser to HRH Crown Prince Hassan.

The Fifth International and Pan-Arab Seminar on Leishmaniasis and Other Zoonoses which concluded its three-day meeting here in Amman last week recommended the establishment of a research centre in Amman — "The Pan-Arab Research Centre on Zoonoses" (diseases com-

mon to both humans and animals) — as well as a network of epidemiological information data.

The research centre will serve in spreading awareness within the community to understand common diseases that occur between man and animal, the zoonotic and parasitic ones, said Dr. Oumeish, who was also the president of the seminar.

In the closing session, and after general discussion and evaluation of the papers presented by Jordanian and non-Jordanian participants from 17 countries, it was decided that "an information dissemination network with national and international connections

be established also in Amman, and be linked with a telemedicine centre in the future, according to Dr. Oumeish.

It was also recommended that such seminars should include workshops on the development of research projects that are related to these diseases, he said.

The participants recommended the continuation of similar seminars with the understanding that they would help in following up on the recent advances in the epidemiology, prevention, control and management of such diseases.

According to Elias Saliba, professor of Parasitology and Medical Entomology at the Department of Biolog-

ical Sciences, Jordan University, scientific discoveries in developing countries are of minor value if people are not aware of them and if they do not benefit people.

"If there is no dissemination of information, then it is simply an academic exercise which does not benefit the community at large," he said.

The seminar dealt with general topics such as the impact of water resources development on public health, new directions in medical education, continuing medical education and community health and development, according to Dr. Oumeish.

Authority calls for joint efforts to reduce earthquake effects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Natural Resources Authority (NRA) has issued a call to the Red Sea littoral countries for the launch of close cooperation in seismology to help reduce the consequences of earthquakes.

Such coordination can take the form of the establishment of an information network to monitor seismological activity in the Aqaba Gulf and the Red Sea areas which have been exposed to a series of quakes and tremors recently, said NRA Director Fakhreddin Daghestani who issued the call.

Dr. Daghestani underlined the importance of conducting joint studies

and research in seismological affairs among these countries.

The earthquake that hit Aqaba Nov. 22 was estimated in intensity as equivalent to 11.6 times the magnitude of the atomic bomb that was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima just before the end of World War II, according to Dr. Daghestani.

He predicted that the aftershocks in the Aqaba region could continue in the form of light tremors over the coming few months.

Dr. Daghestani said a series of seismological activities and tremors hit the Aqaba region in 1969, 1983 and

1993.

According to officials in Aqaba, public facilities such as water and electric supplies were not disrupted. The thermal power plant and the fertilizer complex which are designed to shut down automatically in such situations, were not affected either, officials said.

According to Dr. Daghestani, the NRA's monitoring stations around the country operate around the clock and those in the south cover an area extending from 50 to 150 kilometres to the south of Aqaba city.

Seminar on housing schemes to assess needs and policies

AMMAN (J.T.) — Nearly 100 delegates representing 35 public and private construction and housing organisations in Jordan will on Tuesday open a three-day symposium to assess the housing sector in the country, according to Youssef Hiyasat, director general of the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD).

The delegates, Mr. Hiyasat said, will examine 20 working papers on housing issues in Jordan between 1986 and 1994.

The subject matter will primarily deal with land allotment for housing schemes, finance, infra-

structure services, low-cost housing units and the national economy.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Hiyasat said the meeting will aim at initiating effective dialogue among various parties concerned with or responsible for housing projects, as well as to assess housing policies.

The question of providing housing for limited income groups and the role of the private and the public sectors in this respect is also an issue to be discussed, according to Mr. Hiyasat.

Investment in housing projects for low income groups is not encouraging,

despite the fact that a large sector of Jordanians belong to this category of low income groups, the director general said.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Nader Thuheirat told a seminar in Amman last April that Jordan's population doubled six-fold between 1952 and 1991, standing now at 4.1 million.

According to a working paper presented to a seminar on low-cost housing schemes Nov. 20 the Kingdom requires at least 32,000 housing units each year to meet the growing needs of the population.

UNICEF to hold better parenting seminar

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman-based UNICEF Regional office will hold a four-day seminar called Better Parenting Initiatives, starting Dec. 4, according to a UNICEF press release. The seminar aims to review progress made in the implementation of the multi-channel "Better Parenting Initiative" in countries such as Jordan, Tunisia, and Turkey.

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Karak police Friday were questioning several people from one clan suspected of shooting and injuring two men from another clan in Al Qater town, according to an official source.

According to the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, Ali S.Q. 30, and Mohammad M.Q. 25, were each shot in the thigh by an unidentified man.

He said, without specifying the number of people involved, that an argument

erupted between a group of people from two clans in Karak over lands and crops.

"The argument became heated, and they started a fist fight, and in the end two people were shot," the source said.

He added that police have detained all the people suspected of being involved in the fight and they are questioning witnesses to determine who shot Ali and Mohammad.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times Friday said only that they were investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, in Zarqa two

pedestrians including an 11-year-old child were killed and three others were injured in a road accident on Thursday on the Balma' road, according to Civil Defence Department (CDD) reports.

The report said that Nawal Ahmad, 22, and Salem K., were run over by a car driven by Ahmad Mohammad M., 65, lost control of his vehicle. Nawal and Salem died instantly, the report said.

Mr. Mohammad, who was driving a Volkswagen "Beetle," was accompanied by two other passengers,

Shirin Abdul Karim, 22, and Mourouj Ahmad, 8. They all suffered from fractures and bruises and were listed in fair condition.

Also on Thursday, CDD units attempted to revive a 31-year-old Irbid woman whose heart stopped functioning from carbon monoxide poisoning, CDD reports said.

Eidul S., the victim, was taken to Rosary Hospital suffering from a coma. A hospital official told the Jordan Times Friday that the woman was brain dead.

Amman in the swinging mood for jazz

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Another generous dose of top quality jazz will be injected this week into the souls of those in love with "America's only indigenous art form" (Paulette White).

After the brilliant performance last week of Austrian ensemble Criss Cross, the American Michigan Jazz Masters (MJM) are coming for two concerts at the Philadelphia Hotel: one on Sunday and another on Monday.

The MJM tour in Jordan is held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor and organised by the National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation, in cooperation with the American Centre in Amman.

Roy Brooks on drums, Wendell Harrison on saxophone and clarinet, Harold McKinney and

Teddy Harris Jr. on piano, and Marcus Belgrave on trumpet are laureates of the Jazz Masters Awards. They did not win the much coveted prize overnight or by accident.

The prestigious award is given by Arts Midwest, a consortium of nine states, based on very specific and rigorous criteria of experience, accomplishment, dedication and creativity.

The MJM more than meet the criteria. Looking a bit like an old ragtime, New Orleans band, but definitely playing modern jazz, the MJM can even get funky.

Whether singing in a "scat" or akin to "Manhattan Transfer," they deliver genuinely expressive, highly energetic music.

Their repertoire includes works by jazz greats like John Coltrane, Louis Armstrong, Thelonious Monk, Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington and Char-



The Michigan Jazz Masters to perform in Amman Sunday and Monday

lie Mingus. The MJM will treat their Amman audiences to their own compositions as well.

A special visual solo performance by percussionist Roy Brooks, accompanied by

Emmanuelle Riggins, is also on the programme for both concerts at the Philadelphia.

Oils on canvas narrate collective spirit of landscape, people and nation

By Mahmoud I. Mufti
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — One is struck with a certain "something" upon walking into Abdel Rahim Wakid's exhibition. Subliminally, something definite and acute has registered, but still, one achingly searches for a clue as to what that aspect or element might be.

With the exception of six of the works, drawn in oil pastels, the remaining 41 works feature oil-on-canvas.

Various dimensions are evident, with most renditions being horizontally-opposed. This is the sort of exhibition that requires the viewer to take several loops round and really "study" the pieces; intensity and solemnity abound in the vast majority of the works, save, perhaps, the landscapes (six in all) and the lone still-life.

It is these qualities of intensity and solemnity that constitute that elusive element. And while the latter grabs one's attention, it does so belatedly.

In contrast, the other major feature common to the works, that of deep rich colours, exercises an immediate effect on the visitor.

The pieces fall into three main categories: landscapes, portrayals of people

and nationalistic phenomena intertwined, and finally, abstractions and geometric formations.

The first sort provide for a haven from the intellectual intensity of the remaining categories. Impressionism is the instant evocation exuded by the landscape scenes.

A narrow alleyway in an Egyptian town is flanked by old houses with small windows, high walls and "light" interacting to create the most rustic effect possible, flooding the courtyard within.

Next, a village somewhere in rural Egypt features numerous thatched-roof mud houses under the soaring North African August sun, not surprisingly, giving everything beneath its unrelenting rays an extremely bright demeanour; bright oranges of every shade and hue abound.

In a shanty town, a rusty train, virtually keeling over to one side, makes a valiant attempt at pulling out, to deliver its cargo to another shanty town. It is highly atmospheric and looks like something out of India; the sort of scene where Mahatma Gandhi would typically see off a cargo of provisions to some impoverished village. The sky above is almost Van Gogh in its



A work by Abdul Raheem Wakid

intricacies of form and colour.

In yet another piece, two small boats lurk in the waters of the Nile beneath a bridge just before dawn.

Squint a little bit, and you would swear they were on

the Seine at dusk. Infinite shades of blue, turquoise, indigo and grey conspire to make the feeling of "water" most convincing.

Several other landscapes follow, portraying various village scenes in Saudi Ara-

bia, near Ta'if. One is intrigued to learn from the artist that although the huts are built of stone, the process actually involves the stacking up of longitudinal pieces of rock, lending a semblance of cliff-top houses and monasteries more associated with the wildly-beautiful landscapes of Corsica and Sardinia. "Rugged beauty" is the term that comes to mind.

Mr. Wakid is, without doubt, well aware of this, and allows his brush to make what initially appear as callous strokes on the canvas. In reality, the strokes are carefully studied and intentionally free. The final effect, overwhelmingly impressionistic, rings nonetheless with smatterings of minimalism, the naive style and a sense of two-dimensionality.

Two young girls from Um Qais revel in the nirvana of a spring bloom. Flooding the entirety of the painting, flowers of every shape and aesthetic conviction create the "Garden of Eden" effect. Poppy-like flowers, known in Arabic as "Hanoun" and "Shiqaq Al-Nu'man" seem to occupy the immediate interest of the girls, whose own pure-white head-cloths have picked up some of the surrounding colours and radiate a pink-green haze as a

consequence.

An old man, leaning on a mountain set against the blazing sun (reminiscent of the Mountain of Moses and the Burning Bush), finds himself comforted by an even older, more weary woman who has been robbed of her own self-assurance. The scene is derelict and anachronistic, to the testimony of a smashed and abandoned wagon.

The rest of the works, constituting the vast majority, are essentially depictions of human feelings, aspirations, tragedies and progress. Many are in some way or other connected with the plight of the Palestinians before, during and after the Intifada. Predominating are the Intifada period and the peace era. Here, the artistic style varies significantly, leaving impressionism behind and opting for an invigorated 'minimalist surrealism.'

Some end up being "childlike" in their charm and simplicity, though anything but childlike in their sophistication. Mr. Wakid's work distinctly brings to mind (conceptually rather than stylistically) that of another artist, Ismail Shamout, vis-a-vis "The Palestinian Plight".

The latter is himself a chronicler, through art, of

the many stages of Palestinian national resistance and the countless calamities that have befallen them. A visual history.

Yet Mr. Wakid's works are refreshingly interjected with depictions of non-political aspects of Arab life, such as one featuring a "Bride in Jerusalem", "Musicians" (an Arab lady and man playing the Qanun and Naya, respectively) and a particularly touching one of "Labourers feeding pigeons and cats".

A beautiful woman, forcefully occupying the foreground, hands clasped and head slanted sideways almost in the manner of the Madonna, is seen in serene soliloquy against a background abstracted in particularly rich colours of magenta, green and indigo. One painting, seemingly with an identity all its own, depicts life underground, as if in a deep burrow. In that sense, it brings forth to one's recollection some of the illustrations in Roald Dahl's "Fantastic Mr. Fox," who conjures up much of his cunning plans in similar burrows. One finds oneself almost inclined to title the work: "A Gathering At Mr. Mole's House."

Of the pieces dealing with Palestinian national resistance, a particularly effective one shows the figure of

a kalashnikov-bearing woman floating horizontally from the east side of the frame towards its western aspect, with throngs of people beneath her, led by an old dignified man clutching onto his staff.

Together, they all head towards a "sun" imbued with Arabic letters set against a sinister blood-crimson sky. It altogether seems indicative that peace was only rendered a possibility with the united stand, march, and sacrifice of such warriors (comprising men, women, children and the elders of society) as well as a fundamental grass-roots return to one's Arab identity (symbolized by the Arabic letters in the sun). The people's faces are kept generic as if to suggest not individuals simply gathered there, but individuals acting as one comprehensive and resolute body of resistance. The focus is on the "collective whole", the "spirit"... not the individual.

The inescapable conclusion one draws of Abdul Raheem Wakid's exhibition, whether or not it is to one's taste, is that it has a live, pulsating soul about it.

The exhibition is on display until Dec. 6, with the possibility of extension.

Kremlin, alarmed by rise of Communists, fires new broadside

MOSCOW (R) — The Kremlin has fired a new broadside against Russia's Communists in a sign of growing concern that they are about to stage a comeback.

Sergei Filatov, President Boris Yeltsin's chief of staff, suggested Thursday that a Communist Party victory in a parliamentary election on Dec. 17 could threaten democratic reforms.

"Communists represent a political force which showed over 70 years that it will not surrender this power voluntarily, whatever the conditions might be," Mr. Filatov told a news conference after his latest meeting with Mr. Yeltsin.

"We have no guarantees that after winning power by parliamentary means the Communists would agree to leave the democratic procedure of holding elections intact and would not give up reprisals against people who think differently to them."

Mr. Filatov's comments added spice to a Kremlin campaign to prevent the Communists dominating the next State Duma, or lower house of parliament.

Mr. Yeltsin, who is recovering in a sanatorium outside Moscow after a heart attack, has pledged to try to stop the Communists returning to power four years after the Soviet Union broke up.

Mr. Filatov dismissed suggestions that the president's appeal had only helped boost the Communists' cause.

Opinion polls show the Communists safely ahead of their rivals, although the polls suggest they are likely to obtain a maximum of only 15 per cent of the vote.

Under a law which allows only parties and blocs which win five per cent of the vote or more to take up seats in parliament, few parties are expected to be represented and the Communists' share of the

chamber could be magnified.

One poll cited by Mr. Filatov Thursday showed the Communists were now more popular in rural communities than the left-wing Agrarian Party, a sign that the Communists are still gaining strength. Rural areas have been the Agrarian's stronghold.

Mr. Yeltsin has discussed the election in the last few days with most of his top aides. One, Georgy Satarov, said he expected only about five parties or blocs to get into parliament.

The Kremlin also pushed on with what appears to be a concerted drive to boost the government before the election with revisions of economic policy. The government has already announced some cash handouts.

Mr. Yeltsin approved measures at a meeting with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and top aides Thursday to help exporters and domestic firms, scrap-

ping some export tariffs and cutting export duties on oil and gas.

The Central Bank lowered interest rates to boost investment and adjusted a corridor for the rouble against the dollar. The new range, which will run until next July, will let the rouble fluctuate between 4,550 and 5,150 to the dollar.

The moves appear partly intended to boost the image of Mr. Chernomyrdin and lift his Our Home Is Russia centre-right bloc, which is running in the election.

The 64-year-old president, who suffered his second mild heart attack this year on Oct. 26, looked fit and alert in television footage showing him holding talks with his aides.

Supporters launched a campaign Thursday to re-elect him, although Mr. Yeltsin says he will decide whether to stand in the June 16 presidential poll only after the December election.

Austria's undecided voters lean towards Haider

VIENNA (R) — Two weeks ahead of Austrian general elections support for the far-right edged down to 24 per cent, but a new poll showed undecided voters could swing the election in favour of the rightist party.

Some 42 per cent of voters have still not decided whom they will back in the Dec. 17 snap elections, and fans of nationalist Freedom Party leader Jörg Haider make up nearly half of that figure, a Gallup poll published Thursday said.

"There is a disproportionate number of Haider voters among undecided voters,"

Gallup chief Fritz Karmasin told Reuters.

About 44 per cent of undecided voters said they liked Mr. Haider and 27 per cent said their gut reaction would be to vote for him, the poll in the weekly current affairs magazine News said.

Only 16 per cent of unsure voters said their gut reaction was to vote for Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's Social Democrats (SPOE) and 13 per cent said they leaned towards the Conservative People's Party (OEVP) of Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schüssel.

But among decided voters, the Freedom Party registered 24 per cent backing, down from 25 per cent a week ago.

The Social Democrats are still in the lead at a steady 30 per cent, their lowest popularity ebb since World War II. Their estranged OEVP coalition partners are a dangerously close second at 30 per cent, their highest backing to date.

Mr. Karmasin said accurate voter polls were difficult as many Freedom Party backers were reluctant to admit their choice.

"In the voter polls the

Freedom Party always gets a lower percentage than they actually win on election day," he said.

The grand coalition government of the SPOE and the OEVP fell to pieces in October over a bitter budget wrangle.

In last year's scheduled general elections, the SPOE won 34.9 per cent of votes, their worst election showing since 1945.

The OEVP chalked up 27.7 per cent and the Freedom Party 22.5, which gave them the largest far-right parliamentary representation in Europe.

Burma expels pro-democracy delegates from talks

RANGOON (R) — Burma's military rulers have formally expelled 86 pro-democracy delegates from talks to draft a new constitution, two days after they pulled out on the grounds that the meeting was undemocratic.

Official media said Friday the members of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) were removed from the lists of those eligible to attend because they had been

"absent without leave" for two consecutive days.

Earlier this week 631 delegates, including the NLD members, had reconvened for the fifth time in nearly three years to draft guidelines for a new constitution.

The talks, convened at the whim of the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), are attended mostly by delegates hand-picked by the military and have been

going on intermittently since January 1993.

The delegates were the only representatives to the convention to have been elected.

Their party won more than 80 per cent of the seats in a 1990 general election but the ruling junta ignored the result.

NLD Secretary General Suu Kyi was not allowed to take part in the talks because she had been under

house arrest when they began in 1993 and was not named as a delegate to the convention. On Wednesday she announced her party was pulling out of the talks because the convention was undemocratic.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner called instead for dialogue between the government, opposition and ethnic groups to try and reach a compromise on restoring democracy.

Bolivia believes it has found remains of Che

VALLEGRANDE, Bolivia (R) — Bolivian authorities said Thursday they believed they had found the burial site of legendary leftist revolutionary Ernesto Che Guevara, 28 years after the military killed him here.

A presidential commission appointed to investigate the 1967 death of the Argentine-born Guevara — Fidel Castro's deputy in the Cuban Revolution — credited a "stroke of luck" in finding two witnesses who could help locate his remains.

Hugo San Martin, head of the commission named by Bolivian President Gonzalo

Sanchez De Lozada, told reporters the remains were "located exactly" at a landing strip at the airport in the remote town of Vallegrande, 770 kilometres from the capital La Paz.

Mr. San Martin said officials would begin digging below the landing strip Friday to exhume the remains. The president had ordered that the revolutionary be given a Roman Catholic burial.

The two unidentified witnesses provided key information that led investigators to the spot where Guevara's mutilated and half-burned body is believed to have

been buried shortly after the military killed him on Oct. 9, 1967.

The discovery came after investigators were led to the town and its landing strip by retired General Mario Vargas Salinas, who buried Guevara and other guerrillas there but did not recall the exact site of the mass grave.

The general, ordered by the military high command to find the remains, spent 45 minutes earlier Thursday on the landing strip but was unable to locate the exact burial spot.

The mayor of this town of 6,000, which is surrounded

by mountains of lush vegetation, said he would prefer it if investigators left the area empty-handed.

"The remains of Che should stay here as a historic site of Villagrande and we will do whatever possible to make that happen," Mayor Hoover Cabrera told reporters.

Guevara led a nine-month insurrection in the Bolivian mountains and was executed by an army sergeant on Oct. 9, 1967, a day after he was captured by Bolivian troops. He is probably the most revered hero of the Cuban Revolution.

Gingrich dismisses U.S. ethics charges as phony

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich Thursday dismissed as "totally phony" politically explosive charges that a Republican political action committee illegally helped to finance his 1990 re-election campaign.

Mr. Gingrich angrily denied the charges contained in a Federal Election Commission (FEC) filing Wednesday. The political action committee GOPAC, which Mr. Gingrich then headed, was limited until 1991 to supporting state and local candidates.

"It is totally phony. That should answer all the questions you have," Mr. Gingrich told reporters. "It is phony. How can I make it clear? The word phony should get it across to you."

Saying GOPAC had asked for a summary dismissal of the case, Mr. Gingrich said he hoped the court would comply.

"The judge asked the FEC

a set of questions. They do not start answering his questions until page 44 of their answer. The reason is they don't have (any answers)," Mr. Gingrich said.

Mr. Gingrich denied that the newest revelations and a continuing congressional ethics probe were affecting the Republican political agenda. But opponents stepped up their attacks on the controversial speaker.

Democrats later Thursday, for the second time, forced the House to vote on a proposal that would have required the ethics committee to report on its 14-month investigation of the speaker and provide a timetable for finishing its probe.

The House voted 218-170 to set the motion aside. Nine lawmakers voted present, including four Republicans. No Republicans supported the Democrats.

Michigan Democrat David Bonior, Mr.

Gingrich's sharpest House critic, held a news conference to call once again for the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate the speaker. He accused Connecticut Republican Nancy Johnson, chair of the ethics panel, of stonewalling.

"The FEC report makes it clear that Newt Gingrich's road to power was paved with a corrupt mix of secret contributions, hidden campaign spending and political payoffs to multimillion-dollar donors who had a direct interest in federal legislation," Mr. Bonior said. He called the delay on the case the biggest coverup in the history of the ethics panel.

Ms. Johnson defended the committee's work to reporters prior to a meeting. "On the complaints we have before us, I believe we are doing very well," she said. "We have been rigorous."

She indicated the committee would not take up the

FEC complaint, calling the roles of the FEC and the committee "completely separate".

"The FEC has enforcement responsibilities. We have enforcement responsibilities in certain areas," she said.

A Republican member, Representative Steven Schiff of New Mexico, said the committee was doing its job "despite attempts by Mr. Bonior and others to destroy the process from the outside."

The FEC, which is investigating GOPAC for allegedly violating federal laws, released thousands of pages of internal GOPAC documents Wednesday. It said GOPAC paid expenses of Mr. Gingrich consultants and unveiled minutes of internal meetings that said "Newt must be re-elected."

GOPAC says it supported only local and state races as it was entitled to do.



U.S. President Bill Clinton (right) shares a light-hearted moment with Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams during a reception at Queen's University in Belfast (AFP photo)

Clinton arrives in Dublin for talks

DUBLIN (R) — Bill Clinton, dubbed the "president of peace" by Irish media, flew to Dublin Friday to maintain his crusade for a lasting settlement of Ireland's political and sectarian divisions.

Mr. Clinton, feted like a hero on a 24-hour trip to Northern Ireland Thursday, was assured of a similar welcome in the Irish capital where thousands converged to hear him address a city centre rally scheduled for early afternoon.

He was greeted by President Mary Robinson and Prime Minister John Bruton when Air Force One touched down at Dublin Airport an hour after squally showers gave way to blue skies.

Mr. Bruton said hours before his arrival that the U.S. leader's visit to Northern Ireland would be a "tremendous boost" for a province enjoying its first real peace in 25 troubled years.

"It will show the peace they have been able to build is recognised internationally by the most powerful politician in the world," he said in a statement.

The American leader was due to hold talks with Mr. Bruton, who signed a new agreement with Britain Tuesday to give a stalled

Anglo-Irish peace drive for British-ruled Northern Ireland fresh and badly-needed momentum.

It is aimed at putting the process on a "twin track" under which the two governments will hold preliminary talks with Northern Ireland's rival political parties while an international panel studies the disarming of guerrillas.

Britain set up Northern Ireland as a homeland for a Protestant minority seven decades ago when Irish nationalism burst onto the streets of Dublin and brought an end to centuries of British rule.

The Irish constitution lays claim to Northern Ireland and its people as Irish, a claim backed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas, and its political arm, Sinn Féin.

But the 60 per cent Protestant majority in Northern Ireland want to remain part of Britain and for decades suppressed a Catholic minority and its Irish language to that end. Suspicions on both sides run deep and Mr. Clinton's appearance as an outside "broker" has clearly raised hopes and expectations.

One Irish woman told Irish Radio: "He should be called the president of peace." The tag was picked

up by newspapers and television throughout the republic Friday.

As Mr. Clinton arrived the composition of the international panel on the key issue of disarming the IRA and Protestant loyalists who battled to maintain it was made public.

It will be chaired for Mr. Clinton's economic advisor for Ireland, former Senator George Mitchell. General John De Chastelain of Canada and former Finnish Prime Minister Harri Holkeri of Finland will join him.

The panel is charged with studying how the guerrillas could be disarmed, the main stumbling block to date in the peace process because of Britain's insistence that they shed their weapons to take part in all-party peace talks.

Sinn Féin, which seeks the reunification of Ireland, says the IRA will not surrender its arsenal because such details can only be worked out at all-party talks, not before them.

This angers Protestant Unionist parties which want the province to stay British and who say they will never sit down with Sinn Féin so long as it has a "private army."

Former S. African defence minister, top generals charged with murders

DURBAN, South Africa (AP) — In a historic attack on the old apartheid regime's security apparatus, prosecutors Friday formally charged the ex-defence minister and 19 others with the murders of 13 people in 1987.

The indictment of Gen. Magnus Malan and some of his top generals also implicated Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the present minister of home affairs and leader of the Zulu nationalist Inkatha Freedom Party, in the creation of a paramilitary unit whose members allegedly carried out the massacre.

The case seeks to prove long-standing allegations that the former white-minority government sowed discord between rival black groups — Inkatha and President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) — to help maintain whites' hold on power.

Gen. Malan, 12 other apartheid-era security bosses, Inkatha Deputy Secretary-General Zakhela Khumalo, and six others were charged with 13 counts of murder, four counts of attempted murder and one count of conspiracy to commit murder.

Heavily armed police ringed the courthouse. Gen. Malan and the others evaded a horde of journalists and a band of protesters by entering through an underground tunnel from nearby police headquarters.

The case stems from a year-long investigation into assassination squads in Kwazulu-Natal province, where a decade of fighting between the ANC and Inkatha has left thousands of people dead.

Among them were 13 friends and relatives of Victor Ntuli, a youth leader of the ANC-aligned United Democratic Front. They were at a house in Kwamakutha township south of Durban on Jan. 21,

1987 when it was sprayed with automatic weapons fire. Mr. Ntuli was not there. Among the dead were 10 children.

Six of the defendants charged Wednesday are alleged to have belonged to the so-called Caprivi 200, a paramilitary unit of 200 Inkatha members secretly trained by the South African army in Namibia in 1986.

According to the 65-page indictment, Mr. Buthelezi personally asked the army to train the 200 men, whom he insisted on picking himself, to better protect himself and Inkatha leaders against the ANC in Kwazulu-Natal.

There was no immediate response to the allegation from Mr. Buthelezi's office. He has said previously that probes by the government into Inkatha hit squads are politically motivated.

The indictment alleges that the State Security Council, an inner core of political and armed forces leaders within the white government, including Gen. Malan, approved the Buthelezi request.

Two of the instructors, Andre Cloete and J.P. Opperman, later received orders to run the unit in Kwazulu-Natal. They have since turned state witnesses.

The indictment says that after their return to the province, the 200 trainees "were getting restless and wanted to practice their training." Permission to plan operations against "persons whose death would have a positive impact on the Inkatha Freedom Party" — like Mr. Ntuli — was allegedly granted.

Five of the six alleged Caprivi 200 co-defendants charged Friday later joined the Buthelezi-controlled Kwazulu-Natal Police Force. In addition, four other members of the paramilitary group were thought

to have taken part in the Ntuli shootings.

Gen. Malan, who led the security forces throughout the turbulent 1980s, indicated to journalists this week that his defence will be that the military cannot be held responsible for the actions of people it trains.

The trial is scheduled for March 4.

Gen. Malan and other political leaders from the period have maintained that the government never endorsed killings and torture of its opponents.

The case has threatened to reopen tensions partly eased since Mr. Mandela was elected the nation's first black president in April 1994 and embarked on a policy of national reconciliation.

Right-wing leaders associated with the old regime have urged Mr. Mandela to grant amnesty to Gen. Malan and the others, but Mr. Mandela has refused to interfere with the judicial proceedings.

Gen. Malan maintains his innocence and has said that he prefers a trial rather than to seek amnesty from the new Truth and Reconciliation Commission, appointed Wednesday and led by Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, that will investigate apartheid-era political crimes.

The commission, seen by Mr. Mandela as vital to uncovering the truth about killings and disappearances during the apartheid years, has the authority to recommend amnesty to those testifying fully before it.

Teacher charged with 56 sex offences on teens

WELLINGTON (R) — A school teacher appeared in a New Zealand court Tuesday charged with 56 sex-related offences involving teenage girls, the country's second case involving serial sex crimes this year. The 47-year-old man, who was granted name suppression by the court, was charged with 16 counts of rape and 40 counts of indecent assault on young girls aged between 14 and 17. The number of victims involved in the offences was not clear. He was remanded on bail until Dec. 22. The charges were alleged to have taken place between 1976 and 1985. In August, Joseph Thompson, dubbed "the South Auckland serial rapist", was sent to prison for at least 25 years after pleading guilty to 129 charges, including 46 rapes, in the country's worst serial rape case.

Breeding boosts China captive panda population

BEIJING (R) — China has 48 giant pandas that were born in captivity, having raised its captive-breeding survival rate to 84 per cent from 31 per cent in 1985, the official Xinhua News Agency said. At a panda research centre located at Wolong Reserve in south-western Sichuan province, 36 cubs have been bred since 1987, of which 21 have survived beyond six months, Xinhua said. Only about 1,000 giant pandas survive in the wild in China and their numbers are believed to be declining as their natural habitat, bamboo groves, are whittled away by man. Poaching remains a problem, although it has been reduced by the virtual certainty of death, sentence, upon conviction. China's first breakthrough with captive breeding came in 1978, when a cub was born from a female inseminated with fresh semen, and in 1980, when frozen semen produced a live birth. The report cited a 1990 case in which twins born at the Chengdu City Zoo in southwest China survived.

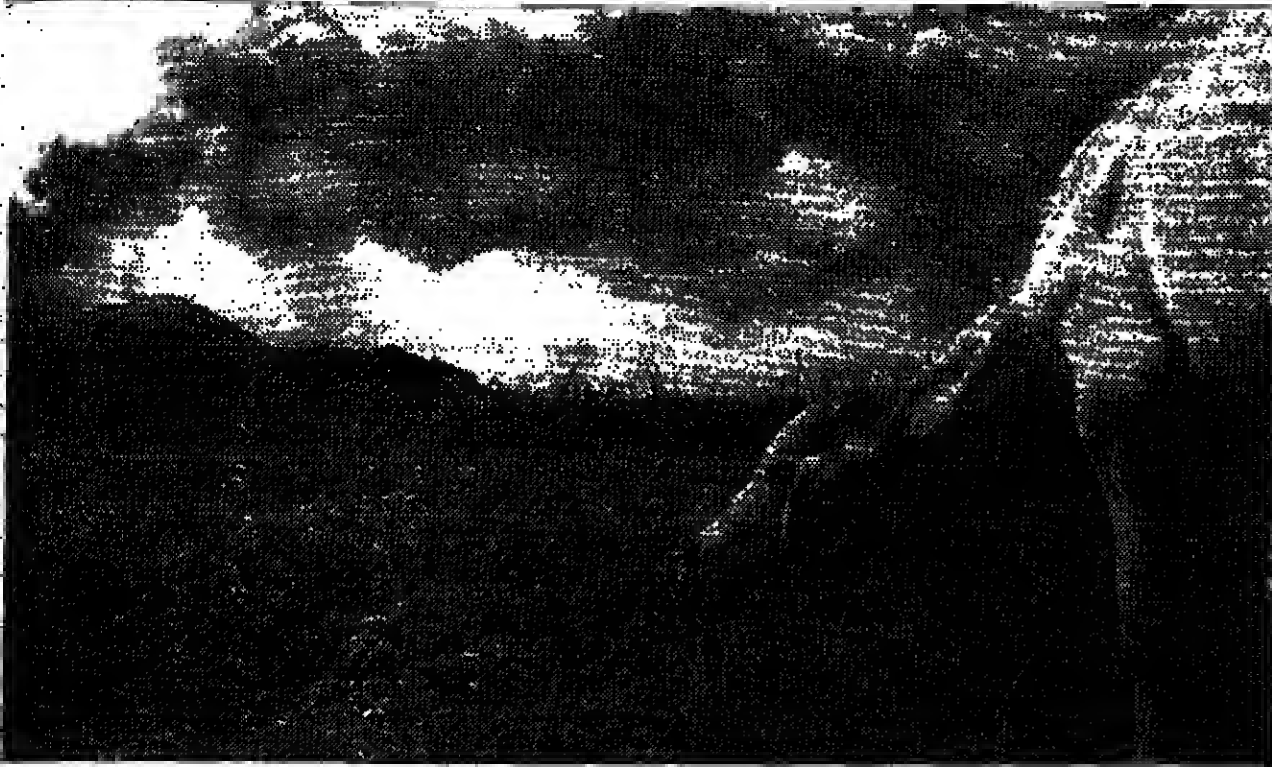
Now Jerry Lewis has got it

LOS ANGELES (AP) — For years, as Jerry Lewis achieved success in the movies and on TV, his father would say, "it ain't Broadway." Thirteen years after his father's death, Lewis says he can finally feel the old man's spirit saying, "now you've got it, kid." The comic starred recently as the devil in a Broadway revival of *Damn Yankees*. The production is now going on tour in what Lewis calls the "cherry on the cake." "What man with my body of work has been given the gift of putting the cherry on the cake?" asked the 69-year-old Lewis, who began performing at 5.

Branagh turns attention to Hamlet

WASHINGTON (AFP) — After his successful film renderings of *Shakespeare's Henry V* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, writer-director-actor Kenneth Branagh now turns his attention to *Hamlet*, with a star-studded production starting work Jan. 30 in Britain. Mr. Branagh will be directing and starring in the production, along with other film greats such as Gerard Depardieu, Charlton Heston, Julie Christie, Jack Lemmon, Sir John Mills, Robin Williams, John Gielgud and Ian McKellen. "The film, like the play," said Branagh, "will have something for everyone. It's a ghost story, a thriller, an action-packed murder mystery and a great tragedy that is profoundly moving. It is also extremely witty and I hope it will be thoroughly entertaining."

December 2, 1995
Teacher's
with
offences



A lone cow grazes in front of the Cerro Negro volcano in Nicaragua (AFP photo)

Nicaraguan volcano covers land with 'black snow'

LEON, Nicaragua (AP) — The Cerro Negro volcano spewed hot ash, steam and 50-pound (23-kilogramme) rocks 1,000 feet (300 metres) into the air, blanketing the area with what looked like black snow and sending people fleeing with the few belongings they could carry.

The likelihood of a full-scale eruption from the volcano, located 75 miles (120 kilometres) northwest of the capital of Managua, was not clear. A group of American volcano experts arrived in Nicaragua Thursday to assess the situation.

But ash from the volcano's continual belching piled up across thousands of acres (hectares) of fields and forests and on the roofs of peasant huts. Trees, shrubs, barvest-ready sugarcane, corn and other crops have collapsed under the weight of the ash. People covered their heads with hats or rags; those on horseback resembled desert bedouins.

"We are facing an ecological disaster. This area will have a hard time recovering from this," said federal deputy Omar Cabezas as he toured the stricken area.

Civil Defence workers struggling to evacuate families at the foot of the 2,200-foot (670-metre) volcano were frustrated Thursday because the heavy ash, dampened by rain, downed tree limbs that blocked roads.

About 6,000 people live in the immediate vicinity of the volcano, which is dumping ash and soil over a 50-kilometre radius that includes Leon, a city of 150,000 people 25 kilometres away.

The government Monday began to evacuate people near the volcano, which rumbled to life Nov. 19 after a three-year lull. It declared a state of emergency in the region Wednesday.

"The water has run out," said Ernestina Delgado, 70, who took refuge with 75 others Thursday in the town

of Lecheguag. "The wells are full of sand and we don't have anything to eat."

Farmers were worried because their animals were refusing to eat grass covered with the sulfuric-smelling ash.

Jairo Vargas, a young peasant from the village of El Porvenir, said at least three families there wanted to leave but could not because fallen trees and limbs blocked the roads and left them trapped.

Mr. Vargas reached his brother's farm and helped him and his family leave in an ox cart piled high with bedding, pots and pans, a dozen chickens and a pig. His 2-year-old niece, her face blackened from the falling ash, cradled a baby chick.

"People who don't leave now aren't going to leave with their things because they will have to go on foot," his brother said.

"It has never rained mud and that is what worries me," said Victor Bonifacio

Delgado, 76, who lives in one of the huts closest to the volcano. "But I'm not leaving yet."

He said when the volcano erupted in 1992 he was among the first to leave and stole everything that I had left.

To get out by ox cart, Mr. Delgado would have to chop his way through five kilometres of fallen trees and branches covering the roads.

President Violeta Chamorro appealed for foreign aid and said the government was sending in food and medicine. She planned to visit the area Saturday.

The Red Cross and other international officials Thursday began shipping food, medicine and other aid into the country for those already left homeless by the volcano.

Vulcanologists from Miami and Arizona travelled Thursday to Cerro Negro to begin tests to determine if and when a full-scale eruption will occur.

Trapped Sri Lanka rebels prepare for final stand

COLOMBO (R) — Some 500 battle-hardened Tamil Tiger guerrillas including suicide squads prepared for a final stand Friday against Sri Lankan forces encircling their northern Jaffna stronghold, military sources said.

Rebel radio said fierce fighting had broken out early Friday in the Kandarmadam suburb as troops resumed their push into the heart of Jaffna City.

The Voice of Tigers radio, monitored by Reuters in the frontline town of Vavuniya, earlier reported heavy fighting around the Columbuturai, Ariyalai, Nallur and Kandarmadam suburbs. It said rebels had slowed the army's advance.

The army has begun flying reinforcements to Jaffna to relieve troops exhausted by more than a month of heavy fighting against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels.

The air force has hired private transport planes flown by Kazakh pilots to maintain the air bridge to Jaffna after losing more than half its fleet of big cargo aircraft to rebel fire and in accidents in the past seven months, aviation officials said.

Commandos and airborne troops tightened their ring around the southwestern area of Jaffna City, considered its centre, while navy patrols kept vigil for rebel boats trying to flee across the shallow lagoon, military sources said.

Military spokesman Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe said Thursday that the army had captured more than half of Jaffna City and would bring all of it under its control soon.

"Give us a couple more days, this Jaffna town will be entirely ours," Brig. Munasinghe told a news

conference in Colombo. "Rebels are offering troops resistance from the south-western side."

Rebels trapped inside the town were heard "screaming for ammunition, help and medical help", Brig. Munasinghe said.

By the army's count at least 1,700 Tiger rebels have been killed and more than 4,500 wounded in the offensive to capture Jaffna City which was launched on Oct. 17.

The army says it has lost more than 400 soldiers, including 17 officers, in the offensive, the biggest in the rebels' 12-year war for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east in which some 50,000 people have been killed.

About 2,000 soldiers have been wounded in the action. Aviation sources said a third AN-24 transport plane

had joined two others hired by the air force from a private domestic airline to fly troops and supplies to Jaffna.

A Y-8 transport plane, the biggest type in the fleet, was shot down by rebel naval wing Sea Tigers off Jaffna while an AN-32 aircraft crashed into the sea in the same area last month.

The air force earlier lost two HS-748 and one AN-32 transport plane and a Pucara ground attack aircraft, all but one due to rebel fire.

The state-owned Daily News newspaper said the LTTE's European leader and international spokesman, Lawrence Thilakar, had fled to an unknown African country after closing the rebel office in Paris.

It quoted Radio Algiers as saying LTTE cadres running safe houses from Rotterdam to Dunkerque were also in "total disarray".

5 nations activate new Eurocorps fighting force

COUVRON, France (AP) — Europe's newest army may be conspicuously absent from Europe's bloodiest modern battleground.

The Eurocorps, a 50,000-troop fighting force of soldiers from France, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Luxembourg, was activated Thursday amid speculation that it might never help keep the peace in former Yugoslavia.

"There are going to be 20,000 Americans in Bosnia. Certainly this corps cannot lead 20,000 Americans," German Defence Minister Volker Rube told reporters at a military base in this northeastern French town.

On the eve of NATO's Bosnia peace mission, his French counterpart, Charles Millon, was even more blunt: "We don't envision any role for this corps in Bosnia."

The Eurocorps, the seed of a continental army, was formally commissioned Thursday, meaning it is ready to be deployed. The

activation ceremonies capped a week of war games and manoeuvres dubbed Operation Pegasus.

The Eurocorps was created in 1992 by former French President Francois Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who envision it as the force that will secure Europe into the new millennium.

The former World War II foes provide most of the force's troops, which are expected to number about 60,000 by 1998.

"Today is a great day — the Eurocorps is operational," Eurocorps commander Gen. Helmut Willmann, a German, declared as helicopters, jet fighters and transport planes buzzed the base.

"It's a major pillar of European defence," said Gustavo Suarez Pertierra, the Spanish defence minister.

But Eurocorps' likely absence from Bosnia and the reluctance to commit a German-commanded force with German troops into

battle leaves the force's effectiveness in doubt.

Mr. Rube said the Eurocorps would produce a "light task force" for humanitarian missions beginning next year, but he said its growth would be limited. "A corps is not an army, and this is a very large corps," he said.

Its future role will be discussed further next week in Paris at a meeting of the Western European Union, the European Union's defence arm.

For a fledgling force, the Eurocorps packs an impressive arsenal: 339 reconnaissance aircraft, 645 Leopard-series combat tanks, 1,043 infantry combat vehicles, 120 ground-to-air missiles, 26 rocket launchers, 599 anti-tank missiles and 792 armed transport vehicles.

The Eurocorps ultimately answers to NATO, and it would remain under the command of the Western military alliance if activated for combat in a European theatre.

The fledgling force gives

Germany its biggest military presence since World War II. For France, Eurocorps is a way to expand its military might while steering clear of NATO's military command.

France was one of NATO's founding members, but former President Charles De Gaulle took it out from under the alliance's military command in 1966 as part of a policy of military autonomy under which U.S. army bases in France were closed.

More than 10,000 Eurocorps troops spent the week honing their combat skills in exercises at the base in Couvron, about 200 kilometres northeast of Paris, where World War II bunkers still stand and monuments to the war dead rise from the rolling farm fields like grain silos in Kansas.

"It's a true beginning," said Gen. Willmann, the Eurocorps commander. "I'm fascinated at how five nations have managed to fuse their forces."

Minister: Scotland plan could lead to independence

LONDON (R) — The government has accused Britain's two largest opposition parties of playing fast and loose with the country's unity as they launched plans to give Scotland its first modern parliament.

Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth said the plans, announced after six years of negotiation between the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties, would "break up the United Kingdom".

The two parties, with non-political allies, said they had agreed on a 129-seat parliament, elected by proportional representation, which would have powers over Scottish internal affairs including education, health, industry and the law. It would be able to vary

the rate of income tax in Scotland up or down by three pence in the pound compared with that in the rest of Britain. The standard rate of British income tax was reduced to 24 pence in the pound in this week's budget.

Mr. Forsyth said Scots would have to pay a "tartan tax" if the parliament was set up by a future government, but he was more worried by the constitutional implications.

"The difference between us and the Labour Party is that we are not prepared to do anything that would threaten the union, and threaten Scotland's interests," he told BBC Radio.

The ruling Conservative Party, trailing Labour by 30 points in Britain-wide opin-

ion polls, is expected to make British union a major issue in an election campaign due by mid-1997.

Prime Minister John Major has said Labour's plans are the start of a slippery slope ending in independence for Scotland.

However, Mr. Forsyth himself recognised the pressures for devolution of power Wednesday when he announced plans to give the committee grouping the 72 Scottish members of parliament more power to discuss bills affecting Scotland.

Labour, which holds 49 of the Scottish seats compared with just 10 for the Conservatives, dismissed Mr. Forsyth's ideas.

"It is not real devolution. It is simply a con trick," said Labour's Scottish

spokesman George Robertson.

"A Scottish parliament will make a huge difference to the lives of millions of ordinary Scots... (it) will bring democracy back to Scotland," Mr. Robertson said in a speech at the launch of the plans agreed with the Liberal Democrats.

Meanwhile, the Scottish National Party, which holds just four parliamentary seats, launched a proposal Thursday for an independent Scotland which would retain Britain's Queen Elizabeth as its head of state.

Scotland was independent until 1707 when it agreed to a single parliament for the whole of Britain.

Taiwan president slams China on election eve

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui Friday launched a broadside at arch-rival China on the eve of elections here, criticising Beijing's threat to attack this island and saying "the ballot is stronger than the bullet".

As Mr. Lee took on China, his ruling Nationalist Party blasted at local opposition forces vying to erode the world's wealthiest political party's grip on power in Saturday's parliamentary polls.

Mr. Lee criticised as negative recent military exercises conducted by China near this island. The exercises sent stock prices into a tailspin as investors feared a Beijing threat to attack what it sees as a rebel-held province.

"The military exercises ... are negative and the actions of Communist China are unwise," Mr. Lee told a group of former U.S. senators and administration officials who are on a private visit to Taiwan.

"These military exercises have also caused worries by the countries of Asia toward the Chinese Communists," a presidential office statement quoted Mr. Lee as saying. "The ballot is stronger than the bullet," he added. The timing of Mr. Lee's remarks appeared to be cal-

culated to combat China's clear attempt to influence voters in the legislative Yuan elections.

Beijing's threat to attack the island if it declares independence may have whittled away support for the main pro-independence party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), analysts have said.

China's criticisms have also been directed at President Lee, whom it believes is covertly in favour of independence despite his statements to the contrary. Taiwan and China split in 1949 after a civil war on the mainland.

Saturday's elections are seen as the ruling Nationalist Party's toughest electoral test yet. Analysts predict they may scrape only enough seats to cling onto a wafer-thin overall majority in the new 164-seat house.

Even ruling party leaders were downbeat. Secretary-General Hsu Shui-teh said he thought the Nationalists would win 85 or more seats, considerably less than the 92 they hold now.

But fighting right up to the bell, the Nationalists hired a television channel and took out several newspaper advertisements to attack the New Party, whose platform of reconciliation

with China may have boosted its chances.

One television scene showed new party member Ju Gau-jeng, dubbed "Taiwan's Rambo" embroiled in parliamentary fistfuffs, and implied that a vote for the New Party was a vote for chaos.

President Lee also said he would take action against New Party leader Jaw Shao-kong for alleged libel of Mr. Lee's name. He did not elaborate.

But not to be outdone, opposition parties also did their best to woo voters.

On the eve of Taiwan's general election, China scoffed at the estranged island's shift to democracy Friday and said the polls there were marred by gangsters and guns.

"Once the election season arrives, a spate of fighting, arson, shooting, kidnapping, assassination and large-scale confrontation and bloodshed breaks out," the official Legal Daily said in a commentary about Taiwan's election.

The prospect that candidates who favour Taiwan independence might do well has prompted China's Communist Party leaders to launch a preemptive campaign of virulent propaganda and live-fire military exercises in waters near

Taiwan. Beijing has regarded Taiwan as a rebel province since the 1949 Communist takeover of mainland China sent the Nationalists into refuge there.

The Legal Daily said gangsters had shot and killed a county council leader in south Taiwan's Kaohsiung City in November and alleged that a third of the candidates elected to local legislative bodies in 1993 had criminal records.

"The result of gangsters and violent elements entering Taiwan's parliament in huge numbers is ... The stinking name 'fighting parliament' is spread far," it said.

The commentary said vote-buying was so widespread it could not be stopped. It noted that more than 400 candidates in the 1993 elections had been charged with vote-buying, including 17 city or county council speakers.

The newspaper said politicians, once elected, abused power for personal gain, speculated in land and scrambled to contract government construction projects. Gangs and vote-buying had "seriously poisoned" Taiwan's social atmosphere, it added.

Bangladesh premier steps up election campaign

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia stepped up her election campaign during a train trip through the country Friday, urging thousands of supporters to vote for her ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

Local journalists accompanying the prime minister who is embroiled in a bitter battle with the opposition over the elections due in March — said by telephone that Bangladeshis cheered Mrs. Khaleda at every station along her journey.

Railway officials said she had covered more than half the 364 kilometres distance from Dhaka to the port city of Chittagong by Friday morning. She left the capital Thursday.

"I am here to seek your support for the sheaf of paddy (election symbol of the BNP) in the coming election," one local journal-

ist quoted Mrs. Khaleda as saying at each stop Friday.

"Vote for the BNP and ensure a safe continuation of democracy for national development and economic prosperity."

Mrs. Khaleda, facing opposition pressure to step down and allow elections under a neutral caretaker administration, a demand she has rejected as unconstitutional, said she could ensure the "fairest" election the country has ever had.

Opposition parties, led by Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, have accused Mrs. Khaleda's government of rigging a parliamentary election in 1994 and of sweeping corruption, and say no election with her in office would be fair. Mrs. Khaleda has denied the accusations.

Mrs. Hasina, speaking before a huge public rally in Chittagong Thursday evening, reiterated that the

opposition would never participate in elections until Mrs. Khaleda resigned.

"We have made it abundantly clear that we will not only boycott but resist any election while she remains in office. She must go ... to ensure the voting is fair," Mrs. Hasina said.

"Otherwise, opposition groups are ready to go ahead with their plan for an indefinite shutdown of railways, ferries, roads and airports from Dec. 7," she said. "Khaleda must be forced from power if she tries to cling on."

On Friday, Mrs. Khaleda again denounced the opposition's demands.

"Those trying to change the government by intimidation and agitation are dreaming of unrealistic goals," she said.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas dissolved Bangladesh's parliament one week ago in an effort to steer the

country out of its long-running political crisis. But he asked Mrs. Khaleda to stay on as leader, a move that infuriated the opposition.

The Election Commission has yet to announce when the poll would be held, although some officials have said they could be conducted as early as January. The United States and Bangladesh's Western allies have said all parties must participate in the polls to ensure their credibility.

BNP leaders said Awami League and its allies, the Jatiya Party and Jamaat-Islami, were afraid of an election defeat and were trying to create an excuse to boycott the polls.

Mrs. Khaleda was elected in 1991 in what were billed as Bangladesh's first free polls, held under then-Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, the interim successor to ousted President Hossain Mohammad Ershad.

Treason charge levelled against Salinas

MEXICO CITY (R) — Mexico's main leftist opposition party accused ex-President Carlos Salinas Thursday of treason and fraud in connection with the 1990 sell-off of state phone company Telmex.

A government source meanwhile said the disgraced former president, in hiding from Mexico's enraged press and public, is currently in Cuba.

His brother Raul Salinas, in letters from jail, admitted "errors" that apparently allowed him to amass a huge fortune, but denied any links to drug-trafficking or other illegal activities.

The leftist Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) demanded that Carlos Salinas be brought back to Mexico to face a "political trial" before Congress

because of alleged irregularities in the sale of Telmex, now owned by Mexican financier Carlos Slim.

"This was the most scandalous pillage of our national assets ever seen," former PRD presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas told reporters.

He accused Mr. Salinas of "systematic action to pillage the country and the population for his own benefit and that of his cronies and associates, which constitutes a clear case of treason for which they must be tried."

PRD officials said Thursday — exactly one year after Salinas left office at the end of his six-year term — was the last day allowed by the constitution for bringing charges against Mr. Salinas related to his

presidency.

The actual complaint filed with Congress authorities made no mention of treason or fraud by Mr. Salinas but detailed the PRD allegations that Telmex was sold for far less than it was worth to the detriment of the nation, and that certain aspects of the sell-off were illegal.

Telmex officials were not immediately available to comment.

PRD officials said it was not clear how long congressional authorities would take to rule on the complaint.

A "political trial" in Mexico has no criminal ramifications in itself, but PRD officials said criminal charges against Mr. Salinas could follow.

Mr. Cardenas also demanded a political trial for for-

mer Finance Minister Pedro Aspe and former comptroller Maria Elena Vazquez and said a criminal complaint will be brought against other former government officials and Mr. Slim.

Mexican daily La Jornada said Thursday that Mr. Carlos Salinas, whose whereabouts have been unknown for several months, was in Cuba and that Cuban President Fidel Castro had written to President Ernesto Zedillo explaining his reasons for taking him in.

A Mexican government source confirmed to Reuters that Mr. Salinas was in Cuba, but said he had no information about any letter. In Cuba, officials said they had no information about whether Mr. Salinas was in the country.

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Straight talk on AIDS

THE INTERNATIONAL AIDS day that fell yesterday was commemorated in Jordan with little fanfare. There was hardly a mention of the occasion, as if the mere whisper of the disease is a taboo in our society. At a time when the illness is taking an increasing toll on people's lives everywhere in the world, including our own, the Arab World's profile on the health crisis is muted to say the least. Perhaps neglect is due to the fact that the subject is seen to touch on sex and sexual behaviour, which our societies in the Arab and Muslim worlds would prefer to sweep under the carpet rather than face head on.

The fact of life, though, within our country as elsewhere in the Middle East, suggests that if anything, the problem is growing and not slowing down. More and more Jordanians are afflicted by the killer virus. The AIDS situation in some of the countries in the southeast region of Asia has reached epidemic proportions due to expanding trade in prostitution in which more and more children are being involved. The Middle East area is at the crossroads between Europe and Asia and this makes us more vulnerable to dealing with the disease, which necessitates that we face up to the danger and take immediate and forceful actions against it.

Is it not high time that there were in place more public campaigns to educate the public about how the illness is transmitted and how it can be prevented. The right place to start this educational crusade is at our schools and universities whose graduates are most prone to travel abroad to finish their studies in countries where AIDS is alarmingly spread. Our business community could also be targeted for this effort because they engage in travel to foreign lands quite frequently. Jordanian tourism to exotic lands is also expanding by leaps and bounds and some of them could come back carriers of the virus without them even knowing. The most pressing message on this occasion, however, is the need to start addressing out in the open the problems associated with the virus that destroys the immunity mechanism system of the human being not only on Dec. 1 but also throughout the year.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ONE DOES not need a great deal of intelligence to notice that the peace process in the Middle East is still in the balance, and stability is as far as ever in the light of Israel's continued occupation of Arab lands and its repeated raids on southern Lebanon. Munes Al Kazzaz, a columnist in Al Ra'i, daily wrote. Far from being comprehensive the agreements between Israel and individual Arab countries have failed to bring real peace based on justice while one continues to witness Israel's military aggression, said the writer. At the political level Israel is still displaying arrogance which is clearly seen in new Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Barak's recent statements in which he declared that Israel would impose its own will and dictate to the Arabs its own terms for a settlement, noted the writer. He said that Mr. Barak has made it clear that Israel will annex parts of the West Bank, and would not return to the pre-1967 borders with the Arab states notably Syria and Lebanon. Mr. Barak who had led the Israeli armed forces in military adventures in Lebanon and was the hero of assassination attacks on the Palestinians has reminded the Arabs that the peace process is being conducted between a powerful Jewish state and weak Arab countries, said the writer who stressed that peace will never be comprehensive as long as Israel holds Arab lands and pursues its aggressive policies.

MOHAMMAD SUBEHI, a writer in Al Dustour commented on a seminar on fighting corruption held last week by expressing the view that combating corruption does not need new legislations but rather the enforcement of the existing laws. The prosecutor general in Jordan holds wide powers and great authority, and he is in a position to enforce the law whenever violations occur, said the writer. The prosecutor general, said the writer, is empowered to deal with economic as well as administrative crimes and crimes committed by contractors and officials who abuse their authorities. The Jordanian laws have empowered the prosecutor general to take action whenever a violation or a crime has been committed whether someone or some department raised the issue and made complaints or not, added the writer. He said that negligence by public officials of their duty or their illegal use of their departments' vehicles for personal ends and many similar violations can and should be handled promptly and speedily by the prosecutor general who has sufficient powers to take action and put an end to such corruption. The writer said that Jordan has sufficient laws which, if enforced and applied equally for all citizens rich and poor, can put an end to all forms of corruption in the country.

Jordanian Perspective

Time to rein in associations, tabloid press

By Dr. Musa Keilani

OUR LAWMAKERS return to the Parliament House today for their annual session. The session, is described as very important and it is, especially that it has to consider a series of measures that would largely streamline the free-wheeling of our tabloid press and some of our never-say-die professional associations, which seek to play a self-assumed political role.

The battle lines seem to have been already drawn with a statement issued by a coalition of 11 groups two weeks ago, vowing to fight the executive authority's planned moves to tighten the Press and Publications Law and reconsider the regulations related to professional associations, subject to a ruling by the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution.

If anything, it is a pity that the Parliament will have to devote its valuable time to consider measures to rein in unruly elements among ourselves at a time when the legislature should be busy with many other pressing issues and moves oriented towards economic development and broader Jordanian interaction with the region in all aspects following the Middle East and North Africa economic summit which was held in October.

We have no doubt that the legislature would stand to the test of time and come out with flying colours in terms of its national responsibilities just as it did in the context of the October 1994 peace treaty with Israel and the subsequent amendments to laws that had to do with our relations with the Jewish state in the new-found era of peace.

We cannot deny that this sad situation where Parliament has to waste its precious time was brought about by the behaviour of some of our tabloids, which seem to be more interested in tarnishing our national image through irresponsible reporting and of some of our professional association which are deviating away from their mandates and acting as political parties (perhaps the heads of some of the associations are playing a self-satisfying role of parliament members after failing to make it in the last elections).

Regardless of all arguments, the fact remains that while everyone has the right to adopt and express his or her opinion in a democratic environment, it is totally unacceptable and undemocratic that some people also try to impose their opinion on others through institutions that owe their existence to democracy.

We use to draw pride from our professional organisations which filled the vacuum resulting from the absence of political parties from 1957 to 1992. They largely served as a forum for Jordanian politics and it was largely accepted by our government. But the rules of the game changed with the enactment of the Political Parties Law in 1992, and the last three years were more than ample time for the associations to realise that their role is no longer political and that they should focus more on improving the status of their members and the respective professions in the country.

As such, some of the associations are, no longer a source of pride for us. If anything, we should be ashamed of the behaviour of some of them, which refuse to accept the changing realities on the ground and continue to cling to outdated beliefs and traditions.

Apart from the focus on negativism in the context of the Middle East peace process as well as Jordanian-Israeli relations, some of the tabloids have also been trying to portray Jordanians as hungry lions waiting and watching the Palestinians across the River Jordan as if to devour them at the first opportunity. Obviously, such reporting has led to serious differences in viewpoints among Jordanians and Palestinians. We can very well do without such differences created by the imagination of a few wicked minds whose motivations are very much subject to question in the context of national unity.

The government is living up to its responsibilities and commitment to democracy by refraining from adopting unilateral measures to curb the phenomena of negativism among us and opting instead to go through the constitutional process in concert with Parliament to bring about legal measures that

would emphasise that freedoms do not go without responsibility.

Precisely, it means that no publication could simply thrive on insinuations and reports damaging our national cause and hope to get away with it under the cover of democracy. The first lesson in democracy is that the weight of public freedoms are equivalent to the weight of responsibility, something that some among us seem to have conveniently forgotten.

One of the measures reportedly under consideration by the government is a tightening of the Press and Publications Law. This could come in the form of increasing the levels of penalties imposed on violators of the law, perhaps including empowering the government to close down publications.

Here, the situation is tricky since the law cannot simply be applicable to some while excluding others since, by the same token, it exposes all our print media to a government axe which could come down on anyone without distinction. This is an area that we should be careful of. While we have full faith in the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and full confidence in its commitment to democracy, we have to live with the fear that subsequent governments might not be so able and worthy of our confidence.

What that effectively means is that the actions of a few among us in the media are going to bring about long-term repercussions on all of us and there seems little we could do about it to avert the collective problem that we all are going to face.

Another major piece of legislation that the government is expected to present to Parliament is a draft law on "national unity."

The law, drawing on the Constitution and the National Charter, is expected to set out clear borderlines for what constitutes acts of undermining national unity and will be very specific on our responsibilities and obligations.

Again, it is a pity that such borderlines and responsibilities have to be spelt out to us instead of our own inherent understanding of our obligations and duties.

The Week in Print

Writers see hope for Mideast peace

Reviewed by Elias Nasrallah

IN THE past week the Arabic dailies prominently covered the Barcelona conference that grouped the Mediterranean countries and the European Union (EU), peace in the Middle East and Syrian-Israeli moves towards a settlement.

It is early to make an accurate estimate of the outcome of the Barcelona meeting but it is useful to point to a number of areas where it achieved success, said Mohammad Kharrouh in Al Ra'i daily. At political level, the EU has succeeded in involving Syria and Lebanon as well as Israel in the meeting, something which the United States has already failed to do in the ongoing efforts to arrive at a settlement between Israel and Damascus, said the writer. At the economic level the EU promised to make available \$6 billion for the benefit of the Mediterranean countries over the coming five years helping them to carry out vital projects for their sustainable socio-economic development, he added. In addition, the EU succeeded in rallying the Arab World's support for its on-going drive against world terrorism and towards ensuring regional security and the protection of the environment, according to the writer. He said the Barcelona meeting will have its far reaching impacts on Euro-Arab relations in the coming years.

In the view of Taher Adwan, a writer in Al Dustour, the Barcelona conference was a major step towards involving the Arabs and the Israelis in a new regional order at the economic and the political levels. The meeting, the third of its kind since the Casablanca and Amman conferences, brought together Israel, Syria and Lebanon for the first time, thus ensuring Israel's continued involvement in political and economic parleys on equal footing like any other party in the Middle East region. According to the writer the Arabs for their part have indulged in regional meetings involving Israel and other parties, moving away from their own summit con-

ferences, and accepting and applying the idea of regional alliances to ensure continued development.

Fahd Al Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the Barcelona meeting was between governments in Europe and the Arab World seeking regional partnerships for future cooperation in political and economic fields. In comparison the Amman summit involved governments and businessmen and was mainly directed towards economy and investments in the region. Referring to Jordan's role, the writer said that the Kingdom succeeded in drawing world attention to its important role in the political and economic future of the region and it remains to be seen now whether Jordan has succeeded in winning a prominent status in the drive to attain close partnership with the European countries as a result of the Barcelona meeting.

According to Nawaf Zaru, a columnist in Al Dustour, the Barcelona conference succeeded in proving to the world that peace in the Middle East is still far off largely due to Israel's intransigent position with regard to its occupation of Syrian and Lebanese territory. The writer said that the meeting displayed to the world the basic differences exist between Israel and the Arab World and confirmed Israel's aggressive attitudes especially as it has refused a proposal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty as demanded by Syria and rejected attempts to make it show flexibility over security matters vis-a-vis Syria and the Palestinians. Furthermore, the writer said, Israel has rejected a Palestinian suggestion that it announce its recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and a Syrian suggestion that it recognise the legitimacy of Lebanon's resistance against occupation.

Accusing new Israeli Foreign Minister Ehud Barak of handling Israel's foreign affairs with a military mentality, Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that Barak's statement demanding that Israel retain military presence and Jewish settlements in the Jordan Valley can in no way be conducive to peace. The writer said that Mr. Barak seems to be determined to deal with the Arab parties in the coming negotiations with the mentality of a victor adding that such attitude can lead to where, but would increase tension in the region. Furthermore, Mr. Barak's stand vis-a-vis the occupied territories which he said should not be returned in their entirety to the Palestinians, is bound to place Israel and the Palestinians on a collision course once again.

The seemingly positive attitudes of Syria and Israel towards each other as displayed at the Barcelona conference were quickly overshadowed by the renewed hostilities between Israel and Lebanon, according to Tahar Adwan.

The writer said that Israel has sent an official warning to Syria asking that it stop attacks against Israel's northern border from Lebanese territories, thus removing all traces of a glimpse of optimism that ensued following the speeches of the Syrian and Israeli foreign ministers at the Barcelona meeting. But, said the writer, the U.S. administration is keen on maintaining the momentum of the peace process between Damascus and Tel Aviv and would soon embark on mediation to smooth matters at least until the end of the coming U.S. presidential elections and the end of the Israeli parliamentary elections.

Tareq Masarweh, a writer in Al Ra'i, cautioned Damascus and Amman against getting involved in hostile media campaigns against each other as such move would further weaken the Arabs. He said there can be no point in such a campaign which draws its origin from the attitude of each party towards the peace process since all sides are not securing an honourable peace but rather an American-styled peace. No one party is faring better than the other since the Arabs have given up their

solidarity and joint action and since all Arab states have accepted the idea of making peace with the Jewish state, added the writer. Fahd Al Fanek, also in Al Ra'i, said that should Amman and Damascus continue to level accusations against each other, the people on the two sides will suffer and no one will achieve any gain. He said that if the two sides decide to close their common borders, Jordan will lose \$38 million worth of exports to Syria while the latter would lose \$70 million worth of its goods exported annually to the Kingdom. But he said Turkey will suffer as a result of the closing of the borders since its land exports of agricultural products to the Gulf states would come to a halt.

There cannot be a single sane person in the whole world affiliated with any kind of religion who would condone the murdering of innocent citizens through car bomb explosions and other forms of acts of terrorism, said Ali Safadi, writing in Al Dustour. It is very sad indeed to hear some extremist and terrorist groups committing such actions and hiding behind Islamic slogans as everyone realises that Islam is a religion of tolerance and peace. The writer said these terrorist groups are doing a great harm to Islam and giving the enemies of this faith a golden opportunity to wage a hostile campaign against Muslims and their religion. The writer said he saw a good and encouraging sign in the denunciation by some groups of the car bomb blasts in Islamabad, Algeria and Saudi Arabia. The writer said that the time has come for all political and religious groups to join hands in the fight against terrorism.

'I-For' spells Bosnia gamble for Clinton, NATO

By Jonathan Clayton
 Reuters

BRUSSELS — A huge gamble by President Bill Clinton and NATO in sending thousands of troops to Bosnia is daily becoming clearer in a Balkans peace countdown.

Success or failure for new-born 'I-For' (the peace implementation force) could have massive repercussions.

"This operation is not open-ended. We will not stay one day longer than is absolutely necessary," then-U.S. President George Bush declared in December 1992 on the eve of the American intervention in Somalia.

Three years later, Mr. Clinton is promising that a new and potentially far more dangerous U.S. mission — this time to Bosnia — will not drift.

In words that could come to haunt his presidency, he vowed the mission would be "clear, limited and achievable."

Mr. Clinton maintains, in a promise eerily reminiscent of Mr. Bush's pledge, American troops will be out within a year.

But Somalia, where 18 U.S. servicemen were killed in a single day hunting for one recalcitrant warlord, showed how easily military adventures can suddenly go wrong.

Defence analysts say the impact of the disaster in Somalia is still reverberating through Washington and partly explains the reluctance of the Republican Congress to support Mr. Clinton's winter foray into the Balkans.

"The stakes are huge, if Bosnia goes wrong the fallout will be devastating," said one NATO source, adding it could even spell the end of the most powerful military alliance ever assembled.

Pledging to "fight fire with fire," and warning U.S. world leadership was at stake, Mr. Clinton appealed to the American public on Monday to support the sending of some 20,000 U.S. troops to Bosnia as part of a 60,000-strong NATO peace-making force.

"If we're not there, NATO will not be there. The peace will collapse. The war will re-ignite, the slaughter of innocents will begin again," he

said in a televised address.

Several European states, their own diplomacy lying in tatters over the Balkan battlefield, have acknowledged that without American leadership the peace mission will fail.

The British and German defence ministers warned on Monday the multinational force, which will include at least nine other non-NATO nations, would fall apart unless the United States lent military muscle to help enforce it.

"I think the American commitment of troops is absolutely essential to the success of the NATO operation," British Defence Minister Michael Portillo told reporters after meeting his German counterpart, Volker Rucht.

"The overall operation cannot be implemented without the Americans," Mr. Rucht said. "Everything depends on this commitment."

NATO's military planners are quietly confident that "I-For" will be a success and herald a new dawn for the West's military alliance, barely a year ago written off by many as a relic of the cold war.

"We like to think we are the only people who can do something like this, now all that is going to be tested," said one alliance source. "If we get it right, we're laughing. But if it all goes horribly wrong, God knows."

NATO officials publicly squabbled with the U.N. this year over policy in former Yugoslavia, but privately fumed at what it considered the world body's incompetence at dealing with the crisis in Bosnia.

"They were desperate to be allowed to do the job, now they have a chance to show what they can do, but they must get it right," said another alliance source.

NATO sources say a successful operation in Bosnia will give the alliance a tremendous boost as it searches for a new role in the post-cold war world, attempts to evolve from a military to a political alliance and considers enlarging into Eastern Europe.

Marijuana buffs in Amsterdam smoke out top weed

By Kelvin Henderson
Reuters

AMSTERDAM — For six days, marijuana connoisseurs from around the globe pored over the pick of the crop in the world's most liberal drug atmosphere. While wine tasters realise it quickly that they cannot afford to swallow too many mouthfuls while working, some of the 1,500 judges appeared to have hard time hanging onto sobriety long enough to make a decision.

The organisers invited couples to judge from a dizzying array of strains with names like juicy fruit, shiva kunk, northern lights and liver pearl. "You could say the people coming here are seasoned experts," said Kevin Caruso of "High Times" magazine, a New York based publication devoted to alternative culture and the promotion of what it sees as the highly versatile weed.

"But we do advise caution," said Mr. Caruso, surveying the packed exhibition hall where "judges" were handing over their 100 registration fee in exchange for a plastic card which gave them access to cannabis seminars and bus tours of Amsterdam's renowned coffee shops where "soft" drugs such as cannabis are used openly.

The Netherlands has never legalised the use of recreational drugs but turns a blind eye to possession of small amounts of "soft" drugs.

The government recently made it clear it intends to tighten up on the numbers of coffee shops allowed to do business and is to cut the amount of cannabis an individual can buy at any one time to five grammes from a current 30.

But Amsterdam remains a mecca for drug tourists, with people coming from as far as Australia and New Zealand because Holland has the most relaxed drug laws in the world, Mr. Caruso said.

Judges spread out sampling strains and taking in cannabis related shows before deciding on the "cannabis cup" in a poll on Sunday.

Mr. Caruso, a non-smoker trying to keep close to the window in the pungently hazy registration

hall, explained that the cup attracted three types of advocate.

"There are the 'hempsters', people who want to make a living out of selling hemp products like fabrics and so on and who advocate medical uses," he said.

Steve Hager, editor of High Times, took up the theme. "You can use marijuana to help treat glaucoma and it's given to cancer patients taking chemotherapy to help them with their appetites," he said.

After the hempsters come "spiritual" smokers, who regard cannabis as a gateway to mystic experience, and finally there are recreational users — "people who smoke because they like it and don't see it as that big a thing," according to Mr. Caruso.

Some cup goers sought out new products available in Amsterdam such as "the incognito", a cheroot packed with a low dose of cannabis that can be smoked without raising eyebrows outside of coffee shops.

Others wanted to pick up some growing lights and plant food, according to Jay Jackson — a U.S. citizen seeking Dutch naturalisation — proudly displaying luxuriantly blooming marijuana plants grown in his hydroponics business.

The crowds around his stall at the Hemp Expo arranged by High Times were drawn by basic curiosity, he said. "People hear so much about these plants but none out of 10 people ever get to see them like this."

Eagle Bill of Ohio had a novel product for cannabis lovers who hate smoking. His newly invented "vaporizer" combined a jar with a paint-spraying heat gun that quickly heats the drug to the point where its active ingredients are released.

"Then you just take a big breath on this pipe and bingo," Mr. Bill announced to his attentive audience, patiently queuing to assess the benefits of the new device for themselves.

"I've vaporized 7,500 people with this thing," he said. "Only 95 guildders (\$60) to buy one."

The 1995 Cannabis Cup winner was a strain called "white widow," entered by the "greenhouse" coffee shop (just next to the Dutch central bank). It ousted the Jack Herer strain which won last year's competition.

Palestinians, peace focus of Diana Abu Jaber's next novels

By George Hishmeh

AMMAN — Diana Abu Jaber, whose first novel about the experiences of first generation Arab-American daughters won national recognition, is back in Amman fine-tuning her second novel with extensive interviews with Palestinian women.

At the same time, she is examining the difficulties of establishing peace between Palestinians and Israelis for a third novel.

In an interview, she said she will focus on the basic question: "What does it mean to try and live in peace with your adversary?"

A young Arab-American descendant of a large and influential Jordanian family, Ms. Abu Jaber is finding her return to her father's homeland "overwhelming." She said she has been continuously fated (and visited) by friends and relatives during this first month here.

Accompanied by her husband, who has just finished law school, Ms. Abu Jaber is "getting used to life in Amman," the capital she last saw about 25 years ago when she was a child.

The daughter of a Jordanian father and an American mother, Ms. Abu Jaber, a professor of creative writing at the University of Oregon at Eugene, titled her first novel, "Arabian Jazz," which publishers Harcourt Brace & Company — described as

"a hilarious, poignant tribute to family bonds, hybrid cultures, and the individual search for home."

Arabian Jazz is now in its third printing in the United States, including a paperback edition.

She will stay in Jordan — and visit other nearby countries — until the summer of 1996, thanks to a Fulbright scholarship that will allow her to research "the experience of (Palestinian) women refugees and weave their stories into a novel-format."

In her near-completed second novel, which is due to be offered at an auction for would-be publishers, the central character is a young Palestinian woman named Alia, who as a child lost her father to combat in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

Alia and her mother spend the next 10 years wandering through refugee camps in Jordan and, in the meantime, Alia "becomes obsessed with the need to remember their past and the stories of the women they meet."

Ms. Abu Jaber explained, "the fabric of the narrative will be made up of Alia's memories and retelling of her experiences and those of her fellow refugees."

This novel is tentatively titled "Memories of Birth." Through her novel, Ms. Abu Jaber hopes to strengthen the understanding and connection between Palestinians and the West and contribute "to international sup-

port for Palestinian refugees."

By encouraging Palestinian women to reconstruct their wartime and lifetime experience, she added in her application for the Fulbright fellowship. "I would hope to affirm for such women the possibilities of global understanding and acceptance."

She continued, "this project is dedicated in large part to helping constitute the Palestinians as a human subject, to create compassionate links, both in Jordan and America."

In the next few months, she said, she plans "to interview as many women refugees as possible, both those living in and out of camps, and attempt to record detailed narratives of their lives, daily events, between the years 1945 to 1950, especially touching on their experiences with the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict."

The story of Alia, who immigrates to the United States, as told by Diana Abu Jaber, "is that of the refugee's struggle for self-recreation, attempting to balance the desire for home with the New World imperatives of individualism and capitalism, to rethink the culturally inscribed roles of mother-protector and bearer of history and translate these into American values."

Alia, Ms. Abu Jaber related, is "haunted by an occluded past, memories of a land and people that persist like a wound. The more she

attempts to silence this past, the more it troubles her, bleeding just beneath the skin."

Hindee, Alia's American-born daughter, has in the years to come watched her mother's "ambivalence on revealing her memories."

As a daughter of dual cultural experiences, Ms. Abu Jaber explained, it is left to Hindee — as it was to her mother, Alia — "to create herself, to navigate between her fears, to learn how to tell her own story."

In 1990, Hindee, an adult, asks her mother directly about her past. "In recounting the stories of the camps, Alia begins to relinquish the pain of suppression," Ms. Abu Jaber added.

Drawing, in part, on her experiences as the daughter of a Palestinian/Jordanian immigrant, she hopes "to discover points of similarity and differences between the experiences of mothers and daughters in exile" giving special attention to the issues that arise when one generation attempts to pass its loyalties and feuds to the next.

"The stories and information from these women would directly inform the novel's characters, their memories, personalities, and relationships," she said.

Her novel, she noted, follows the tradition of multicultural novels such as Nawal Al Saadawi's "Woman at Ground Zero," Fadia Faqir's "Nisani," and Maxine Hong Kingston's "Woman War-

rior." The format of intertwined stories and points of view, she pointed out, echoes historical Arabic poetry and lore as in Kalila and Dimna, as well as in American literature including Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury."

Ms. Abu Jaber said her undertaking in Jordan is unique "not only for its exploration in the effects of exile upon Arab women, but in creatively interweaving this with a discussion of the survival of Palestinian culture among the displaced younger generations."

Other fellow Arab-American writers like Joseph Geha ("Through and Through") and poet Naomi Shihab Nye are beginning to introduce Arab-Americans stories to an American readership, "but mostly from more diffuse humorous or metaphorical orientations."

Her work will be one of the first to speak from Palestinian, Jordanian, and American perspectives mingling ideologies and personal nlooks. It will be the first literary work in the United States, she pointed out, "to narrate from a personalised perspective the events of 1948 and their impact on Palestinian women, their families and communities."

In her own profession and personal development, she related, Palestinian women at the forefront of political uprisings, as well as in the peace movement, have been her role models.

She is particularly attached to her grandmother, Anissa Zorub, who left Nazareth to marry her Jordanian grandfather.

"Exhibiting the Palestinian's characteristic attachment to education," she noted her grandmother began in her home one of the first libraries in Jordan.

"My grandmother's bravery and vivid experiences gave me some of my earliest inspiration to record and share women's stories. Raised in a family of story tellers, I learned that writing and oral histories were among the most effective conveyors of cultural memory. These beginnings shaped and informed the body of both my academic and creative work..."

Alain McNamara, executive director of the new Binational Fulbright Commission for Educational Exchange in Jordan, which awarded Diana Abu Jaber the fellowship for her research, said his group is the newest of only four such binational commissions in the Arab World. The commission's co-chairman are the Jordanian Minister of Higher Education, Dr. Rafea Saoud, and the U.S. ambassador in Amman, Wesley Egan Jr.

For nearly two decades, Jordanian students and scholars have been the recipients of grants named after the Late Senator J. William Fulbright — USIA.

Laughter by day, screams by night for Sarab

By Ruben Alabastro
Reuters

MANILA — By day they watch cartoons on television or play like ordinary children. The nightmares come later, when they awake sobbing or screaming with fear.

Princess Sarah and Boy Sweden, assumed names for a girl and a boy both aged 14 years, are among an estimated 100,000 child prostitutes in the Philippines.

At least they were, until social workers at a shelter group called Bahay Tulyan (refugee home) plucked them from Manila's vice-infested streets to try and rebuild their shattered lives.

"Some of them make it but... many of them will go back to being prostitutes or into related jobs... like working in bars," social

worker Teresa de La Cruz said.

One 11-year-old girl was undergoing rehabilitation but, still driven by her urges, would steal out at night looking for men, one sociologist said.

In a country where poverty is rampant and where there are 1.5 million children working in factories or prowling and living in city streets, it was inevitable that child prostitution would become a flourishing industry with international connections.

Apart from Filipinos, there is an international clientele of tourists and businessmen, including Americans, Britons, Belgians, Germans, Swedes, Swiss, Arabs, Australians, Japanese and Koreans.

"It's a big money industry... an international operation," said Irish priest Shay Cullen, who runs a

rehabilitation centre in Olongapo city, north of Manila.

Efforts to curb the trade have failed because of corrupt law enforcers who protect it in exchange for bribes, he said.

Of 264 prosecutions of paedophilia recorded in the country the past 10 years, not one has resulted in a conviction.

In some cases, mothers drive their own children into prostitution, social workers said.

Studies estimate there are one million child prostitutes in Asia, with the Philippines among the top suppliers alongside India with 300,000 child prostitutes, and Thailand and Taiwan with 100,000 each.

The tally, compiled by the Thai-based End Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) group, estimates

there are 40,000 children prostitutes in Vietnam and another 30,000 in Sri Lanka.

In Manila, she can be the victim knocking on a car window begging for coins, a neatly dressed 12-year-old strolling at Rizal Park or a girl in rags selling flowers in Ermita district.

On average, they earn 150 to 500 (\$5.75 to \$19) a night, studies show.

Until she was rescued from the streets, Sarab could earn as much as 6,000 (\$230) a night, given to her, she said, by a man with small eyes "who she believed was a Korean. Nearly half of it, she said, went to her pimp."

It was June and Thursday in sleazy motel in Manila when she met her first paedophile, a fat, white-haired Filipino named Mario. She never felt the shock of losing her virgin-

ity. "I was crying but I did not feel anything because he gave me something to drink to make me sleep."

The bad dreams were to come later, dreams haunted by a pimp taking her to a car, telling her, "Let's go now. The foreigner is waiting at the hotel."

"I would wake up feeling afraid and I would just cry."

It was not always motels with Boy Sweden. Sometimes, he said, it happened in dark alleys, in parking lots or in the shelter of trees at Manila's Rizal Park.

The homosexuals that had undressed him since he was 10 would come back to him in his dreams. "They would do things to me and I would just scream in my sleep," Princess Sarah's sobbing

fits and Boy Sweden's nocturnal screams are effects of the trauma they have been through, said clinical child psychologist Maria Lourdes Carandang.

At play they look like any other child because children have a way of pushing traumatic experiences deep down within themselves as defences to prevent breakdowns, she said.

"But there is a very dark world deep inside them... there they feel the shame of what happened to them, there they feel degradation."

Some girls, fully rehabilitated, are able to develop healthy relationships, even marry and bear children, Ms. Carandang said.

A few unlucky ones go back into the night, still carrying their pain inside them, "looking for money, for thrills, for men."

Peres says peace agreement could be halted

(Continued from page 1)

loyment and final peace talks set to start in May. The Israeli leader first earned on Nov. 27 the chair had to be changed. But Mr. Qouriea said Mr. Peres would not threaten his Palestinian peace partners. He repeated warning pointed up recent tensions between the sides.

Israeli troops wounded 18 Palestinians in Nahlus on Thursday and two Israeli soldiers escorting a bus were mowed down when shots were fired at them, apparently from a roadside ambush, not far from the Jenin Palestinian self-rule enclave.

Israel declared a temporary freeze on its West Bank takeover after a kidnapping of two of its soldiers in Jenin on Wednesday by men affiliated with Mr. Arafat's Fatah action in retaliation for

Israel trying to arrest a Fatah man in nearby Kabatiyeh.

Palestinian security forces negotiated the soldiers' release. The Fatah man wanted by Israel surrendered to Palestinian forces.

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators met late on Thursday to hash over the Jenin and Kabatiyeh incidents.

Mr. Qouriea, who attended the meeting that lasted into the early hours of Friday, told Reuters: "The redeployment process will continue as scheduled next week. There will be redeployment from Bethlehem and villages around Hebron."

Israeli troops are to withdraw from the towns by year-end.

Mr. Qouriea said a closure Israel imposed on Jenin would be lifted for Palesti-

nians on Friday but Israelis would be barred until next week. Israeli Arab shoppers are key to the town's economy.

Mr. Arafat has said the kidnapping resulted from Israel's poor handling of the wanted Fatah man in that, despite having overall security responsibility in rural areas like Kabatiyeh, it should have coordinated with Palestinian police.

Israel accused the PLO of failure to ensure Israel's security. Under the West Bank deal, some 140,000 Jewish settlers will remain in the territory pending final peace talks.

Israel and the PNA meanwhile agreed to open a liaison office in Bethlehem on Sunday in preparation for the army's withdrawal from the holy city in time for Christmas.

Kabariti

(Continued from page 1)

Kabariti said all the principles and general policies contained in the document are in conformity with the Jordanian position.

On Jordan's support for a French proposal on joint regional security, Mr. Kabariti said Jordan's support falls

Egyptian opposition

(Continued from page 1)

sources said turnout was no more than 10 per cent.

It was an election marred by violence: Police said 12 people died and more than 80 were wounded on Wednesday and Thursday in incidents connected to the poll.

Gen. Afifi suspended 12 police officers for irregularities during polling, the official MENA news agency said, adding that they were accused of intervening to help some candidates.

All parties complained of their observers being thrown out of polling stations during counting, ballot boxes arriving at stations stuffed with NDP votes, and hundreds of government employees being shipped in to vote.

The hanged Muslim Brotherhood, whose candidates stood mostly as independents, said almost 2,000 of its supporters and three candidates were arrested in an attempt to prevent them campaigning.

The Islamist bloc, considered the NDP's main rivals, comprising the Muslim Brotherhood, Labour and Liberal parties, failed to make a breakthrough.

All the most prominent members of the Brotherhood were eliminated in the first round, although 12 candidates did make it into the run-offs.

However, 12 Brotherhood candidates made it into the second round. Opposition newspapers hurled fresh charges of

within the context of the implementation of the Barcelona resolutions and principles. The countries participating in the Barcelona summit agreed on the need to work out an executive programme to implement the points agreed upon, he said. Based on this, Jordan has supported the French proposal without any reservation, Mr. Kabariti said.

ballot-rigging at the authorities on Friday. Al Ahrar, mouthpiece of the Liberal Party, said the election was "the worst in the history of Egypt."

Their charges were backed up by human rights organisations, although one group, the Human Rights Legal Aid Centre, said independent candidates had also been guilty of fraud.

Government newspapers attributed the opposition's poor showing to its weakness. But Labour Party leader Ibrahim Shukri, eliminated in the first round of voting, said: "The government has no legitimacy after demonstrating its determination to stay in power using bandits and fraud."

Militants' response

Muslim militants urged Egyptians to take up arms against the government after accusing it of ballot-rigging during parliamentary elections.

The International Justice Group (IJG), in a statement entitled "Hily war is the solution," said vote-rigging in the election on Wednesday proved that the government simply wanted to muzzle all forms of opposition.

"It is time for sincere Egyptians to take up arms and wage a jihad (holy war) to eradicate this regime which carries out all sorts of injustices and tyranny against thousands of young Muslims in Egypt," it said.



IN MEMORY: Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev lays a wreath at the grave of the late Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, in Mount Herzl cemetery in West Jerusalem. Mr. Grachev is on an official visit to Israel, the first by a Russian defence minister to the Jewish state (AFP photo)

NATO signals massive Bosnia operation

(Continued from page 1)

Joulwan, expects the deployment of the bulk of the main force to be completed within 30 days.

Next week, NATO ambassadors will also begin finalising the composition of the force, which will include up to 12 non-NATO countries, including Russia.

The United States will be the biggest contributor with 20,000 troops in the main force and at least five thousand more in the support operation. Britain is to provide 13,000, France 10,000 and Germany 4,000 non-combat troops. As the peace process

moved into gear, a shot was fired across its bows by the French U.N. commander for Sarajevo, General Jean-Rene Bachelet.

Gen. Bachelet said the deal brokered in Dayton by the U.S. government had been forced through to promote President Clinton's reelection campaign.

The general was particularly critical of a clause hinging Serb suburbs of Sarajevo under the control of the Muslim-Croat government, along with the withdrawal or dissolution of Serb militia in them.

Gen. Bachelet told the French daily Ouest-France

that Sarajevo Serbs were "panicky" and would flee in their thousands, burning their homes in a scorched earth strategy if their militia were dissolved.

"We would then watch French soldiers on television screens directing traffic while houses are burning," Gen. Bachelet was quoted as saying. "If the operation fails, we, the French, will be held responsible."

Bosnian Serb sources in their "capital" Pale, near Sarajevo, reported on Friday that Serb civilians had begun leaving suburbs to be handed over but said it was a trickle rather than a rush.

Papandereou remains stable

(Continued from page 12)

event floor of the Athens limic — which has virtually become an annex to the parliament — are now looking more to the future than to Mr. Papandereou's illustrious political past.

There are signs that the ace for succession has already begun, with the front runners being Defence Minister Gerassimos Arsenis, Interior Minister Akis Tsohatzopoulos and Costas Simitis, a former minister and one of PASOK's leading lights.

Whatever happens, Greeks are seeing his illness as an opportunity to turn a new leaf.

"It's the end of an era," said political analyst Panayotis Dimitras. "But the political void could be immense, and it will take a long time for another real political personality to emerge," he added.

"This illness will clear the political landscape," lawyer Photis Porizias said. "It will

allow PASOK to free itself from the yoke of its founder and modernise itself."

Though Mr. Papandereou may be in the throes of, at least, a lingering political death, the ensuing turbulence would probably have no lasting effect on a healthy Greek economy, according to leading economic journalist Haralambos Papadimitriou.

But that makes little difference to the hundreds of his supporters massed outside the Onassis clinic — like Heleni, a 62-year-old Cretan housekeeper, who said she was "distracted" at the prospect Mr. Papandereou's exit from the political stage.

But there is also a certain impatience beginning to creep in to the Greek political psyche with their prime minister's constant brushes with poor health.

"The situation is intolerable," said 40-year-old Athens dentist Andreas, "we must have a new man for Greece to go forward."

Woman

(Continued from page 12)

Amir, a student at a religious law school who opposed Mr. Rabin's peace process with the Palestinians, has remained in solitary confinement since he admitted shooting the prime minister at a Nov. 4 peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Jewish settlers on the West Bank have also been violently opposed to turning over large parts of the territory to the Palestinians.

Har-Shefi is also suspected of giving Amir the name of a "technician" who was to help him build timebombs. The weapons were to be used in attacks against Rabin and Palestinians, the police said.

She was also allegedly asked by Yigal Amir and his brother Hagai, to find clothing so they could "pass unnoticed." The clothes were to help Yigal get close to Rabin and Shimon Peres, the current prime minister who was foreign minister at the time and also a target.

Yemen agrees to move to second phase of reform

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen plans to give early retirement to 25,000 government employees and increase oil prices under reforms proposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), government economists said Monday.

The austerity measures were agreed during negotiations with the IMF which ended here last week and are the second phase of economic and administrative reform launched in March, they said.

A total of 25,000 employees will be given early retirement at the start of next year, oil prices will be increased by 50 per cent in March and fees for telecommunications, water and electricity will also be raised.

Around one million Yemenis work for the government or serve in the army.

The government will also try to raise more revenue from customs duties and taxes.

But the authorities will also try to create a safety net for the poorest Yemenis in order to soften the blow of the economic reforms, the economists said.

Yemen, one of the world's poorest countries, in March launched a broad programme of structural reform proposed by the World Bank and IMF, which called for an end to state subsidies, privatisation, and cutting bloated bureaucracy.

Street protests erupted in the southern city of Aden when the government doubled the price of oil and services in the first dose of austerity handed out in March.

Yemeni Prime Minister Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani

said the second phase of reforms "seeks to improve the standard of living of Yemenis and shore up the national currency," which has lost 80 per cent of its value this year.

Mr. Abdul Ghani also told the government daily Al Thawra that Yemen would receive IMF loans to increase its foreign currency reserves after it launches its second phase of reform scheduled for March 1996.

The amount would be used to strengthen the Yemeni rial and cut the deficit in the balance of payments, which has surpassed \$2 billion in the last three years.

On Saturday, the Arab Monetary Fund granted a \$68 million loan to Yemen to help in its economic restructuring, bringing to \$459 million the total value of loans it has given the country.

The World Bank agreed in October to lend Yemen \$80 million to finance development projects supervised by the international body and \$20 million to create 10,000 jobs.

Unemployment is running at an estimated 35 per cent.

"The World Bank has promised to grant \$20 million more if the job-creation project proves effective," the secretary of state for finance, Ahmad Ghaleb, told AFP.

Meanwhile, police have arrested dozens of unemployed money-changers in the Yemeni capital after a fall in the rial's value against the dollar.

Last week, the exchange value of the rial fell from 116 to 127 against the dollar. But on Sunday, the U.S. currency was trading at 115 rials on the black market.

Japan told future prosperity depends on 'painful change'

TOKYO (Agencies) — Japan has failed to cope with the tide of change and must undergo painful social and economic reform if it is to restore strong growth and assume global responsibilities, said an economic plan for the government delivered Wednesday.

Prime Minister Tomiichi Maruyama's advisory Economic Council, delivering its "New Economic Plan," said Japan was at "a turning point."

It set a new mid-term target of 3.0 per cent in real annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the five years to March 2001, but said that would only be achieved if restructuring took place in both the economy and society.

The consequences of eschewing change would be lower growth, higher unemployment and only marginally lower inflation, said the council, headed by Gaishi Hiraiwa, former chairman of Tokyo Electric Power Co.

Its recommendations are expected to be endorsed by the government.

The council said in the preamble to its draft summary that Japan had been unable to cope with "shifts in

the tide of domestic and world events."

Those shifts were the progress of globalisation, Japan's transition to an advanced and mature economy and society, its trend towards an ageing population with fewer children, and advances in information and technology.

"The current social and economic structure of Japan has been unable to cope with these 'tide shifts,'" the council said.

Other factors, such as the burst of the "bubble" economy at the start of the 1990s, the strong yen, non-performing assets, the Kobe earthquake and the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway helped increase uncertainties about the future.

"The solution to these structural issues will require radical reforms in Japan's social and economic structure, and changes in the way we as individuals think," it said, conceding that "the process of these structural reforms will inevitably be accompanied by some pain."

In its mid-term plan, nearly all the 3.0 per cent growth target would stem from domestic demand due to recommended deregulation and structural change.

The council said that without further restructuring, real GDP with domestic demand accounting for 1.5 percentage points of that outcome.

It forecast an unemployment rate of 2.75 per cent in the year to March 2001, but said without the changes it would be 3.75 per cent.

Consumer prices could rise by an annual average of 0.75 per cent over the five years as a result of the recommendations, but no change would result in an average 0.5 per cent annual increase.

Economic reforms would also boost Japan's involvement in the global community through the reinforcement of multilateral free-trade under the World Trade Organisation, while contributing expertise and resources to assist in solving problems that cannot be solved by countries working on their own.

At the centre of the council's restructuring plan was the establishment of an "advanced information communication society" and the implementation of an ongoing three-year deregulation plan.

Action in the two areas was essential to achieve the target, it said.

Growth in capital spending

in both the public and private sectors would be necessary for the launch of that information society.

The council said its forecasts assumed the creation of a nationwide optical fibre network by March 2011, from a coverage ratio of 10 per cent in the year to March 1996.

It also recommended providing every high school with 42 computers for educational use and each elementary school with 22 units by March 2000.

The council said deregulation was essential to correct Japan's high-cost structure and to reactivate domestic industry.

It said it expected production in the information, communication and related areas to total about \$7 trillion yen (about \$870 billion) in calendar 2000 and 155 trillion yen in 2010, up from 56 trillion yen in 1993.

The council expected six other emerging areas to also lead economic growth — corporate activity support, human resources, health and welfare, leisure and living, good quality housing, and the environment.

Annual production in the seven areas was forecast at

286 trillion yen in calendar 2000, rising to 436 trillion yen in 2010, compared with 184 trillion yen in 1993, the council said.

The plan, Japan's 13th such blueprint, noted the "hollowing out" of Japanese industries, with output shifting overseas, as a result of strong yen and high labour costs coupled with delays in the growth of new industries.

The plan, which will be submitted to the cabinet for approval on Friday, also said worries over employment persisted as the unemployment rate has been running at a record 3.2 per cent for five consecutive months.

It also noted the growing proportion of old people in the population and slow improvements in living standards, and called for deregulation to bring down the high cost of living.

The proposed deregulatory steps, which are somewhat vague, cover areas such as distribution both in the wholesale and retail sectors, energy, telecommunications, financial services, transportation, agriculture, public works projects, housing construction and customs procedures for imports. The measures are to be implemented by fiscal 2000/2001, and the

government will review their implementation every year.

The new plan also called for the government to help nurture new businesses. It saw the greatest potential growth in sectors such as information networks, medical and welfare services, leisure, education, the environment and housing.

These are expected to create new jobs for 7.3 million people by 2010, the plan said.

Improving housing and living conditions continues to be a key challenge, as many Japanese pay great sums for cramped houses disparagingly dubbed rabbit hutches. Many people live far from their workplace and have to endure a long commute.

In the previous plan, Japan aimed to cut house prices to about five times the average annual income. This has been achieved with the help of a drop in land prices, officials said.

The new plan sets a target of providing houses with an average floor area of around 100 square metres and increasing the number of people living in them to one hour. It also aims to reduce house building costs to two-thirds of the current level.

OECD warns U.S. against further interest rate cuts

WASHINGTON (R) — The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has warned the Federal Reserve (Fed) against any further cuts in interest rates, saying U.S. economy should enjoy moderate growth next year without a change in monetary policy.

In its annual review of the U.S. economy, the 25-nation OECD also welcomed efforts by Washington to balance the federal government budget, but voiced some disquiet about how that might be achieved, since plans included proposed cuts in social spending for the poor.

The OECD report is good news for President Bill Clinton, who has been making some of the same arguments about the budget in his battle with the Republican-led Congress and who has been counting on a continued economic expansion to enhance his reelection chances next November.

The U.S. economy is projected to experience moderate growth for the remainder of 1995 and in 1996, the Paris-based OECD, which acts as a think tank for in-

dustrial nations, said. Specifically, it forecast U.S. growth next year of about 2.5 per cent, after three per cent this year. Inflation is expected to remain moderate, ticking up only slightly, while unemployment is projected to edge up to about six per cent next year, from 5.5 per cent now.

The OECD forecast assumes no change in short-term interest rates through the end of next year by the Federal Reserve. The U.S. central bank trimmed rates for the first time in nearly three years in July, but has held them steady since then.

"The danger is that further reductions in short-term rates... might ultimately prove inappropriate and could need to be quickly reversed," the OECD said.

"Overall, a cautious stance seems desirable, one that demonstrates vigilance against any return to inflationary tendencies."

The group argued that a tough anti-inflation stance by the Fed would buttress international confidence in the dollar, which could be susceptible to bouts of weakness from America's "sizeable," albeit narrowing, overall

trade deficit.

Such a stance though could prove a disappointment to U.S. stock and bond markets, which have been counting on at least one more cut in interest rates by the Fed, perhaps in conjunction with a deal to balance the budget, analysts said.

The OECD has long advocated lower U.S. budget de-

ficits and generally welcomed the fresh efforts by Congress and the Clinton administration to end the government red ink.

But it raised some questions about some of the methods suggested for achieving that, including Republican proposals to cut back on earned income tax credits for poor working

families and on government investment, two programmes favoured by Mr. Clinton.

"Paring the income security function, reducing taxes for the middle and upper income groups and slashing health care spending... would add up to a substantial diminution of the role of the federal government in income distribution," OECD said.

It argued that Republican plans to hand over responsibility for some social programmes, such as health care for the poor, to the states, would lead to cuts in public services, not just increased efficiency.

"The results... will most likely weaken the social safety net," it said.

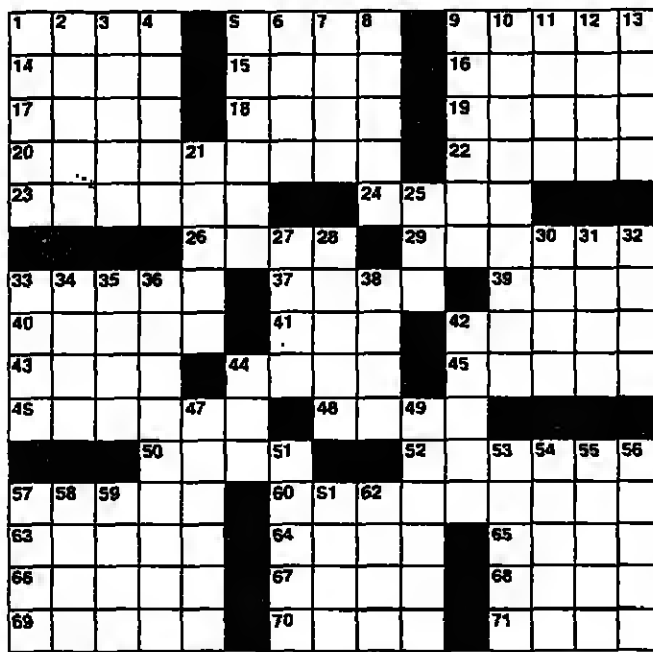
ANNOUNCEMENT

THE CENTRAL BANK OF JORDAN
The Central Bank of Jordan announces that in accordance with article (30A) of the Central Bank Law No. (23) of 1971, the second issue JD 20 banknote, the brown and the blue, will be withdrawn from circulation as from 2.12.95.

The note, which bears the portrait of H.M. King Hussein on the front and Al Hussein thermal power station and olive trees on the back, will be exchanged at the Central Bank and its branches in Irbid and Aqaba as well as the commercial banks and their branches until 31.5.96. After this date the second issue JD 20 banknote will no longer be legal tender and will continue to be exchanged only at the Central Bank and its branches.

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia B. Hopewell

- ACROSS
- 1 Aesthetic pursuits
 - 5 Naive one
 - 9 Very much
 - 14 High-spirited
 - 15 Wind instrument
 - 16 Conspicuous success
 - 17 Ballet movement
 - 18 God of war
 - 19 Table mat
 - 20 Bell device
 - 22 Loosen
 - 23 "Where... is heard..."
 - 24 Mad
 - 26 Concordes
 - 29 Takes exception
 - 33 Sticky substance
 - 37 Hold sway
 - 39 Words of understanding
 - 40 Source of credit
 - 41 Once — while
 - 42 Odor
 - 43 Conflict in literature
 - 44 — de force
 - 45 Certain curves
 - 46 Elegiac verse
 - 48 Agreement
 - 50 Cravals
 - 52 Rupert or Langston
 - 57 Toil
 - 60 Voice amplifier
 - 63 Organic compound
 - 64 Brewery products
 - 65 Mollo at the Mel
 - 66 Leonine features
 - 67 Suitable niche
 - 68 Nonaligned: abbr.
 - 69 Anxiety
 - 70 — and hearty
 - 71 Sala phrase



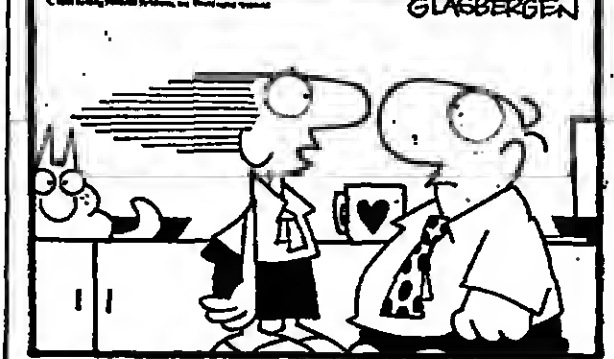
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Thursday's puzzle solved

CODA ACHES MIGS
OMAR SHORE ISLE
GAZE CAPRA KNEW
SNEAKERS PLATEN
CENT FOOD
SLOYD GARGOYLE
SHOD TRITE OIL
WAVE SWANS FUNK
AVE STINT ORED
MERCHANT SIREN
LINE CHAT
POLANO SHANNOCK
AXES OFTEN ELLAI
PENS FLASK SEAT
ANDY FONTS SOME

- 42 Glass, ice, and mixer
- 44 Nautical chain
- 47 Most dreadful
- 49 Virtuous
- 51 Big hit
- 53 Accra's land
- 54 Sharpens
- 55 Boredom
- 56 Benches
- 57 Buddhist priest
- 58 To — (unanimously)
- 59 — Crosby
- 61 Logan or Raines
- 62 Earth sci.

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a good day today to shop and market to your heart's content, but keep your wallet or purse in a safe place and don't get short-changed.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Study your income and see where you can cut down on expenses at this time so that you gain a quick reserve. Seek new ways to add to it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is a good day to visit your barber or beautician and improve and modernise your appearance. You are not expressing your full potential.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Try to see or call as many good friends and fellow associates as possible today and make plans for recreation together in the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You can accomplish a great deal in public today, so get an early start on such. Be with bigwigs and express your finest talents.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Plan just how to meet the persons you admire and give you the information you need for an important project. Drive more carefully while on the highway.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The day is good for clearing up mercantile and other material problems efficiently. Enjoy a hobby you like with close friends.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Have long conversations with others today so that you know just where you stand with them about any assignment. Rest up tonight.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get a new plan of action worked out so that you can handle your affairs more efficiently for the days to come, which will bring you success.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Divide your time well today so that you can handle practical affairs and then enjoy yourself with congenial friends and loved ones.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Make those improvements at home today which are needed and necessary and be creative at them so loved ones will be impressed.

Birthstone of December: Turquoise — Zircon

**By a Jordan Times Staff
Reporter**

The weekly AFM report said turnover for the week ending Thursday was 5.5 million dinars, up slightly from the previous week's 5.1 million dinars. Average daily trading was 1.1 million dinars compared with the previous week's 1.02 million dinars.

Two million shares changed hands during the week under 2,589 contracts involving stocks of 83 companies, the report said. When business closed for the week, eight of the companies had

The official AFM index based on 60 major companies closed at 148.7 points, down 4.5 points or 2.9 per cent from the week's opening of 148.7 points after having recovered from the week's lowest at 147.2 points.

Separate indices showed that banks dipped by 3.7 per cent, industrials by 2.4 per cent, services by 0.2 per cent and insurance by 0.1 per cent.

AFM brokers said the depression in the market was largely due to a shortage of liquidity after funds moved

That was a reference to the monthly issuance of several million dinars' worth of three- and six-month certificates of deposit (CDs) by the Central Bank, which often uses CDs as a tool to defend the dinar against the dollar by offering higher interest yields whenever international interest rates on the greenback go up.

Another element that is holding back speculators is uncertainty over a new law related to the stock market. The draft law will allow foreign investors to come in freely with capital and allow unrestricted repatriation of capital and profits.

"The law has been in the making for more than one year, with no one exactly knowing when it will be presented to Parliament and enacted," said a dealer, who.

Officials said the draft law was ready and would be presented to Parliament this month after the legislature opens its regular annual session on Saturday. However, "there is no definite date for the passage of the law since Parliament has other urgent legislation and the annual government budget to consider as priorities."

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
CENTRAL CENTRAL TRADING & STORAGE	768	0.710	0.710	0.690
JORDAN TRADING FACILITIES	23,475	0.720	0.720	0.700
UNITED CO. FOR ORGANIZING LAND TRAMS.	3,093	2.130	2.130	2.030
ASAR FIB. IND. CO.	37,690	0.960	0.960	0.900
UNION INVESTMENT CORP. 50%	15,290	0.890	0.890	0.870
ASAR FOOD & MEDICAL APPLIANCES	8,248	0.930	0.930	0.780
ASAR INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	6,064	0.610	0.610	0.610
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MACH/JINCO	293	0.810	0.810	0.780
NATIONAL CHLORINE INDUSTRIES CO.-LTD	21,454	1.430	1.430	1.580
NATIONAL TEXTILE & PLASTICS IND. CO.	798	0.940	0.940	0.900
TEX-ARMY-JORDAN MANUFACTURING CO.	151,213	2.070	2.070	2.000
ALCO PHARMA	22,496	0.740	0.740	0.750
JORDAN STEEL	45,519	0.970	0.970	0.920
ASAR ELECTRIC INDUSTRIES	2,811	0.720	0.720	0.730
UNION TOBACCO	16,943	1.210	1.210	1.100
HAZEL PHARMACEUTICALS	2,330	0.770	0.770	0.770
INDUSTRIES ENGINEERING	18,540	0.760	0.760	0.720
INDUSTRIAL CERAMIC	82,320	1.340	1.340	1.300
J. TEXTILE MANUFACTURER	6,400	0.450	0.450	0.440
NATIONAL POULTRY 50%	1,767	0.850	0.850	0.840
NATIONAL MULTI FIB. INDS./PANICO.	689,727	0.970	0.940	0.940
GRAND TOTAL		1147342		

☆☆ **WATER AND** Irrigation Minister Saleh Irshaidat has recommended to the Council of Ministers amending the charges for drinking water and sewerage services so as it would be close enough to cover the costs of operations and maintenance. The minister pointed out in his recommendation that total operational and maintenance expenditure, including general and administrative expenses, during 1994 amounted to JD 44 million whereas savings from water and sewerage service charges would amount to JD 34.6 million. The minister said that the total cost of water supply and sewerage subscription fees would be about JD 34.6 million. The Water Authority has pumped 219 million cubic metres at a cost of 19.4 fils per cubic metre but the earnings amount only to 15.81 fils per metre, meaning that income does not even cover the cost of operations and maintenance. Dr. Irshaidat said that the parties which finance the ministry's projects continuously demand improving the financial situation of the ministry by raising charges. He added that agreements were in fact made with some of them to increase the charges this year. It was recommended that the new charges be effective from Jan. 1, 1996. (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ THE CABINET has approved recommendations by the Council of Development to grant a new licence to set up, operate and manage a cellular telephone network that would be operational before the end of 1998. Also approved was giving a new licence to establish a network and provide general paging services and, at the same time, adjusting the situation of the first licensee to correspond to the new telecommunications law. In addition, the Cabinet authorised issuing a licence to provide data exchange services to support the business and banking sectors as well as educational and medical services. The last two licences that were authorised were for public phones and movable-radio communications. (Al Ra'i)

★ **THE MINISTRY of Transport** intends to review *favours for the transport sector in light of the outcome of a study being carried out by specialised foreign companies*. Transport Minister Saïd Kassar told representatives of truck-owners that the ministry is considering the idea of establishing truck depots in Amman, Irbid and the Jordan Valley similar to the Aqaba truck depot. Mr. Kassar said his ministry had completed a preliminary study to modify the axial weight regulation to bring about a balance for loads of Jordanian trucks with the modern European standards and specifications. The minister pointed out that Jordan had agreed with Iraq and Lebanon on "diesel fees exemption" on reciprocity bases and is currently negotiating with Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to implement the exemptions to ease the burdens on the Jordanian transport sector within the policy of liberalising it from restrictions (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ **THE ARTICLES** of association and the internal regulations of the Arab German Insurance Company were signed this week by about 20 main founders: The company, which is under establishment, has a JD 5 million capital, 50 per cent of which will be covered by the founders and the remaining half will be floated for public subscription. According to Said Taani, the company's general manager, agreements were made with German reinsurance firms to be the technical backers of the company. Moreover, he said, the company's working area would be widened to include the Mideast region and North Africa. Mr. Taani saw wide opportunities for his company and pointed out that only few types of insurance are provided in Jordan despite the availability of more than 50 types.

(A) Dstour).

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Hughes tips United to take title

LONDON (R) — Mark Hughes believes Manchester United can win the English Premier League title for the third time in four years, even if his immediate aim is to derail their championship aspirations.

The former United striker returns to Old Trafford for the first time on Saturday following his £1.5 million (\$2.3 million) summer move to Chelsea.

He has nothing but admiration for United, who can narrow the gap on leaders Newcastle to two points with Kevin Keegan's side not in action against Wimbledon until Sunday.

"I don't see why they can't win the championship again this season," Hughes said of his old club. "We have played both the challengers and obviously I am biased towards United."

"But I think as the season goes on their young lads will get stronger and stronger. They are looking good."

Hughes is out for revenge after United inflicted a 4-1 Stamford Bridge defeat on Chelsea in the league last month.

He scored against his old mates that day. "I enjoyed my goal against the lads, but it spurred United on to great things," he said.

"It was a bit like pulling the tale of tiger. You score against them so they go up the other end and stick a couple in."

He added: "I am sure it will be an emotional moment returning to Old Trafford, but I have always had a great relationship with the United fans."

"Even at Stamford Bridge they cheered when I scored. It's the first time I have ever

been cheered by both sets of supporters.

United will not want to lose another chance of closing in on Newcastle after they could only draw 1-1 with Nottingham Forest on Monday.

But they will be missing three key players including goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel, who is recovering from an elbow operation.

He is replaced by 20-year-old Kevin Pilkington as United bid to stop Chelsea improving on their record of having lost just twice in their last 20 visits to Old Trafford.

Midfield pair Roy Keane and Nicky Butt are suspended.

Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson has warned his players not to be complacent about the visit by Manchester City.

"People look at City's position and see them down near

the bottom, but they've taken 10 out of the last 12 points so they cannot be underestimated," Wilkinson said.

Swede Tomas Brodin is again expected to start for Leeds after forming a dynamic midweek partnership with Nigerian striker Tony Yeboah.

City have bounced off the bottom to stun the critics who viewed them as relegation fodder.

City manager Alan Ball said: "I am delighted but must emphasise this has been a team effort. We all kept our nerve even when things were looking bad."

City's revival has put the pressure firmly on Bolton, Coventry and Queens Park Rangers at the foot of the table with three clubs being relegated.

Bolton entertain UEFA Cup contenders Forest while Rangers face Juventus and

Bryan Robson's ambitious Middlesbrough. Coventry meet Sheffield Wednesday on Monday.

Third-placed Arsenal, hoping to keep the pressure on, face a difficult task at Aston Villa, while Spurs tackle Everton.

Champions Blackburn and Liverpool will seek to bounce back after their league cup exits on Wednesday when they entertain West Ham but the Sweden striker is unlikely to start the match.

Gudmundsson, recruited this week on loan until the end of March, is not yet regarded as fully match fit by Ray Harford, although the Rovers manager will delay a final decision.

One foreigner, definitely back for Rovers is Norwegian World Cup star Lars Bohinen, who was cup-tied for the league cup loss at Leeds on Wednesday.

Giants down Cardinals 10-6

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

TEMPE, Arizona (AP) — The New York Giants beat the Arizona Cardinals, another team going nowhere with a coach who may not be back, 10-6 Thursday night by making Dave Brown's third-quarter touchdown pass to Mike Sherrard stand up.

The Cardinals made a thrilling at the end, driving from their own 10-yard line to the New York 8 in the final 1:50 before Dave Krieg misfired on four straight passes.

Vencie Glenn of the Giants figured in the two plays that turned back Arizona drives in the fourth quarter, intercepting Cardinals rookie Stoney Case in front of the goal line and running to the Giants 5 with 6:39 to play.

That helped break up Krieg's final pass, aimed at Wendall Gaines in the end zone with 14 seconds remaining.

But, like almost everything else the Cardinals did, the pass was off the mark, a punt too high for Gaines to pull down.

The Giants (4-9) did not lead until Brown capped an 83-yard drive with his 12-yard throw to Sherrard 4:48 into the second half. It was the only score of the half.

Greg Davis kicked 44- and 28-yard field goals for the Cardinals (4-9), and Brad Daluisio, who failed on two other attempts, answered with a 51-yard boot — all in the second quarter.

The Giants had beaten the Cardinals 27-21 in overtime Oct. 8, starting a cycle of overtime every other game for Arizona. This one was close, but after the Giants' touchdown, an extra period was less likely.

From then until the end, the Giants hung on with good defense while Arizona was undone by mistakes. One such mistake was by punter Jeff Feagles, who decided to run for it on fourth-and-3 from his own 30 midway through the third quarter.

Philippi Sparks dashed across the field to tackle him a yard short.

The Giants couldn't capitalize, and Daluisio, who missed a 46-yard field goal in the second quarter, lined up for a 47-yard kick.

Eric Swann, who missed the first meeting of the NFC east rivals, blocked it and Jamir Miller recovered.

Then it was the Cardinals' turn.

After a run by Garrison Hearst and a completion, Krieg badly overthrew Frank Sanders, the Thomas Randolph intercepted and returned it 15 yards to the Giants 34.

Case got his first six NFL snaps because Michael Strahan hit Krieg and forced a fumble with 10:46 left in the game. The Cardinals recovered, but Krieg had a stinger in his left arm and had to leave for a series.

Case's first pass went for 19 yards to Larry Centers, and he later ran 4 yards on his first scramble. But on second down he forced a pass into double coverage, and Glenn picked it off at the 2 and returned it 3 yards.

The Cardinals outgained the Giants 94-8 in the first quarter, but came up with nothing.

Their 71-yard drive with the opening kickoff ended at the 5 when Krieg overthrew Roh Moore on fourth down after coach Buddy Ryan decided to pass up the field goal for a try at six points.

The next time Krieg took a snap, Strahan sacked him, he fumbled and Robert Harris recovered for New York.

The Cardinals got another 26 yards on their next possession before the drive ended on two incomplete passes, but the Giants made a mis-play on the punt. It bounced and hit would-be blocker Rodney Young in the face mask, and Arizona's Anthony Edwards recovered on the 34.

Four plays later, Davis kicked his first field goal.

Davis' second came after another Arizona drive stalled by mysterious play-calling.

On third-and-9 at the Giants 10, Krieg got rid of the ball quickly — to Larry Centers at the 10. After the no-yardage play, Davis hit his 28-yarder with 3:05 left.

Etoile looking to record books

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Tunisia will join an exclusive African soccer club if Etoile du Sahel overcome Guinean visitors Kaloum Stars in the second leg of the CAF Cup final on Saturday.

Only Ivory Coast have won the three continental club competition, Stade Abidjan lifting the Champions Cup in 1966, Africa Sports National the Cup-Winners' Cup in 1992, and Stella Abidjan the CAF Cup one year later.

But if Etoile justify their favoritism after forcing a goalless draw in Conakry two weeks ago, Tunisia will also complete a hat-trick of club victories.

Club African raised the Champions' Cup in 1981 and better-known Esperance emulated them years later which CA Bizerte collected the Cup-Winners' Cup in 1988.

The form book hints at an Etoile triumph, as they won previous home matches against JS Bordj Menaïel of Algeria, Ferroviario of Mozambique and Malindi of Tanzania with a 6-0 goal tally.

Tunisian international Zoubeir Beya could pose the biggest threat as he appears to relish playing in the eastern coastal town of Sousse, the home of Etoile and venue for a match which Ivorian Zeli Sinko will referee.

Beya struck the goal which eliminated Bordj Menaïel under the away-goal rule and opened and closed the scoring in the three-goal, quarter-finals demolition of Ferroviario.

Etoile warmed up for the cup final with a 2-0 away win over AS Gabes in the national championship through goals from Brazilian Clayton Ribeiro and Guass Ghodhani.

Kalonm, whose initial attempt to win the CAF Cup ended in first-round failure, are the first Guinean finalists in Africa since Horoya defeated MAKED of Algeria in the 1978 Cup-Winners' Cup.

And although their inability to convert sustained pressure into goals before a capacity 45,000 crowd in West Africa has left them with an uphill task, Stars achieved impressive away results en route to the decider.

In the first round they defeated one of the pre-competition favourites, Africa Sports, 4-3 in Abidjan, drew 2-2 with another leading contender, Asante Kotoko of Ghana, and topped giant-killer Inter Club 1-0 in Congo.

Guinean hopes of success rest largely on snatching precious away goal and national under-23 forwards Abdou Karim Sylla and Momo Soumail are proven scorers.



The world's fastest woman: an exuberant Griffith Joyner at the finish

Flojo eyes 400m world record at '96 Olympics

ATLANTA, Georgia (AFP) — Florence Griffith Joyner, a three-time champion in sprint events at the 1988 Olympics, is aiming for a 400-metre world record here next year when she chases more Olympic gold.

"I feel I can't accomplish a world record in the 400 and I want to prove to myself I can do it," Griffith Joyner said here Thursday as she was inducted into the U.S. Athletics Hall of Fame.

Griffith Joyner won 1988 Seoul Olympic crowns at 100m, 200m and in the 4x100m relay after setting a 100m world record of 10.49 seconds at the 1988 U.S. Olympic trials.

Griffith Joyner, who turns

36 in three weeks, was amazed to find herself honoured for her achievements while still in condition to compete.

"It's such a surprising honour to be chosen, something you think and dream about," she said. "It's truly great to be here when I'm still young."

Known for her flashy clothing and decorated fingernails, she has left behind her sprint stardom and started training for longer distances. She was considering a marathon bid before looking to a shorter race.

"Up until three months ago, I was training for the marathon. But now I have switched to the 400," she said. "I'm just now starting to

work out on the track and doing a weight programme. "After '96, I will definitely train to compete in marathons because it has always been a dream of mine. I have never run a marathon. The farthest I have done in training is 13 miles. But I just want to try it and know what it feels like."

She is guided by her husband, Al Joyner, who is bidding for an Olympic berth in the triple jump and decathlon.

Others inducted here Thursday included Don Lash, Marty Liquori, Louise Ritter, Valerie Briscoe and former U.S. Olympic athletics coach Mel Rosen.

Sampras beats Chesnokov in Davis Cup final

MOSCOW (AP) — Pete Sampras outlasted Russia's Andrei Chesnokov in five gruelling sets Friday to give the United States a 1-0 lead in the Davis Cup final, then collapsed on the final point with an apparent leg cramp.

Sampras hantling the slow clay he disliked and a partisan crowd of 14,000, overcame a sluggish start before prevailing 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-7 (7-5), 6-4.

But his dramatic collapse on the game's final point, which ended when Chesnokov hit the shot wide, left his status for the rest of the best-of-five final in doubt.

After Sampras lay in pain on his back for as few seconds, his teammates carried him off the court.

The Americans, seeking their 31st cup title, sent Jim Courier against top Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the other opening day singles. Russia, hosting the final for the second straight year in Olympic stadium, has never won the Davis Cup.

The 29-year-old Chesnokov, a battler who once won a Davis Cup set 24-22, pulled off one of tennis' most remarkable comebacks in the same stadium in the semifinals in September.

As a result, he is almost certainly the only tennis pro-



Pete Sampras of the United States is helped to get up by the members of the American team after he won the Davis Cup final match against Andrei Chesnokov Friday in Moscow in five sets. Sampras fell flat on his back after the match was over and was helped to leave the court (Reuters photo)

fessional awarded the order of courage by his nation's president.

"I still don't know what to make of it. It's an award that

is usually given only after your death," Chesnokov joked Thursday.

The Russian, who once was ranked 10th in the world

but now is 91st, was considered the weak link in the Russian team that faced a German lineup led by Boris Becker and Michael Stich.

With a spot in the finals on the line, Chesnokov dodged nine match points against Stich's powerful serve while trailing 7-6 in the fifth set.

Gazza suspended

GLASGOW (AFP) — England's Paul Gascoigne, who was involved in controversial headbutting and elbowing incidents against Aberdeen last month, was suspended for two matches by the Scottish Football Association.

Though he will be allowed to play against Hearts on Saturday, Gascoigne will not play a league game for Rangers until December 26 after the Tynecastle clash.

Before then, he faces two matches on the sidelines because of Scottish Football Association suspensions — against Partick Thistle at Ibrox on December 9 and at Motherwell on December 19.

Gascoigne and team-mate John Brown have been given one-match bans starting from Monday for their involvement in the infamous November 11 game with Aberdeen.

But the England star was already due to serve a one-match ban under the SFA's totting-up procedure anyway, and is therefore out for two games.

Rangers will also be unable to call on recent signing Derek McInnes on Saturday, as he completes a two-match suspension carried over from his spell with Morton.

WORLD SWIMMING Van Almsick scratches from her best event

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — German star Franziska Van Almsick scratched from her showcase event at the World Swimming Short Course Championships on Friday as Chinese Le Jingyi looked poised for a second gold medal.

Having already been disqualified from the 100 metres freestyle final, Van Almsick scratched from the 200 metres free, saying she did not feel strong enough to compete well.

"Her performance has not been good, so she did not swim," German women's coach Achim Jedamsky said. "She also has been sick recently with a cough."

Van Almsick was the last-placed qualifier for the 100 metres freestyle final Thursday but was disqualified for a false start in the final. Jedamsky said she was doubtful for the women's 4x100 metres freestyle relay on Saturday.

Martina Moravcova of Slovakia was the top qualifier in the women's 200 metres free with a time of one minute 58.73, followed by Costa Rica's Claudia Poll in 1:59.62.

China's Le, winner of the women's 100 metres free on Thursday, appeared set for a second gold over 50 metres.

She led the qualifiers by clocking 25.09 seconds, hammering the two lengths of the 25-metre course with her straight-arm stroke.

Second qualifier was Sandra Voelker of Germany in 25.39.

The men's 400 metres freestyle heats set up a likely battle between Australians Malcolm Allen and Daniel Kowalski. Allen was fastest qualifier in 3:48.97, followed by Kowalski in 3:49.29.

"I'm surprised to be the top qualifier, but it felt really good," said Allen, who mostly trains for the 1,500 metres.

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Heat beat Pistons for 3rd in a row

NBA ROUNDUP

DETROIT (R) — Keith Askins scored 11 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter and Alonzo Mourning added 23 and 13 rebounds as the Miami Heat defeated the Detroit Pistons, 118-107, for their third straight win on Thursday.

After a pair of baskets by Otis Thorpe cut the Miami lead to 103-100 with 2:55 to play, Askins hit a pair of three-pointers to seal the victory. Thorpe finished with 24 points and five rebounds.

"Right now I have confidence in my shot," said Askins. "Every person in this room has confidence and I don't even hesitate when it's open."

In Houston, Karl Malone scored 27 points and John Stockton hit two key three-pointers in the fourth quarter as the Utah Jazz beat the Houston Rockets, 112-105.

It was Utah's first game against the Rockets since being eliminated by Houston in the first round of the Western Conference playoffs last season, three games to two.

After Sam Cassell pulled Houston even at 92-92 with a three-pointer, the Jazz went on a 12-5 run to take control of the game.

In Orlando, Dennis Scott scored 29 points and Penny Hardaway had 24 points and 11 assists as the Orlando

Magic won their sixth straight game, a 110-96 victory over the Dallas Mavericks.

Nick Anderson added 14 points and Horace Grant had 13 rebounds for Orlando, which had complete control of the contest.

"I'd be lying if I said I thought we'd be 13-2 at the end of the month but I did think we'd be in the thick of things," Magic head coach Hill said. "What this team has done is mature very quickly from the playoffs of a year ago."

In Portland, Glenn Robinson's 12-foot fadeaway jumper from the right baseline with 10 seconds left lifted the Milwaukee Bucks to a 100-99 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers, snapping their three-game losing skid.

Rod Strickland, who had 18 points and 10 assists, had a chance to win the game, but his 16-foot jumper with three seconds remaining did not fall.

Robinson led the Bucks with 31 points.

In Sacramento, Olden Polynice had 21 points and Brian Grant added 20 as the Sacramento Kings won their fourth straight game, 105-95, over the Indiana Pacers.

Sarunas Marciulionis had

18 points for the Kings. Reggie Miller had 21 points and Eddie Johnson added 17 for the Pacers, who have lost three of their last four games.

In Vancouver, Michael Jordan scored 19 of his 29 points in the final 6:48 as the Chicago Bulls rallied for a 94-88 victory over the Vancouver Grizzlies.

Chicago improved to 5-1 on its seven-game road trip, and Vancouver has lost 13 straight games after starting the season with two wins.

Greg Anthony made a basket to give the Grizzlies a six-point lead with 5:37 left, but Jordan scored the next nine points, with his three-point play with 3:35 remaining giving.

At Washington, Terrell Brandon had a season-high 29 points and a career-high 15 assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers defeated the Washington Bullets, 97-85, for their fourth straight victory.

Since starting the season with seven straight losses, Cleveland has won six of its last seven games.

"We started out 0-7 because I couldn't figure out what was the right and wrong combination," said Cleveland coach Mike Fratello.

Italy wins first ever Volleyball World Cup title

TOKYO (AFP) — World champions Italy captured their first-ever men's volleyball World Cup on Friday with Brazil and the Netherlands to join them at the Atlanta Olympic Games next year.

The Italians, who clinched an Olympic berth on Thursday, scored a convincing 15-6, 15-5, 15-4 victory over the United States, their 10th straight win in the 12-team round robin tournament.

"It is very important that we won the World Cup without losing a match because a team can easily lose after qualifying (for the Olympics)," said Italian coach Julio Velasco.

"This shows that we are not mentally weak," he added. "But it doesn't mean we have any security for the Olympics. Other teams will improve and will be aiming to beat Italy. So I'm going to tell my players to prepare for Atlanta as if we had lost the World Cup."

When he took over the Italian team in 1989, it was a collection of skilled indi-

viduals, but not a good team," Velasco said.

Captain Andrea Gardini, a 10-year national team veteran, said that playing in the World Cup had forged the Italian side into a team.

"Our biggest goal here was to win a place in the Olympics, which we did," he said. "But I hadn't expected that the tournament would turn us into such a good team."

"Now that we have won the World Cup, our next goal is to win the gold medal in the Atlanta Olympics," he added.

Italy's best previous Olympic result was a bronze medal in Los Angeles in 1984. They were world champions in 1980 and 1994 and placed fifth at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Barcelona Olympic gold medalists Brazil powered past China 15-4, 15-7, 15-7, while silver medalists the Netherlands shocked a partisan crowd by downing Japan 15-3, 15-11, 15-12.

Brazil and the Netherlands now have 8-2 win-loss records, ahead of the United States and Japan at 7-3.

Brazil and the Netherlands will retain their Olympic berths even if they lose their final matches in straight sets Saturday because of better set averages than Japan.

As hosts, the United States automatically get an Olympic berth.



Brazil's Antonio Gouveia (9) smashes the ball as Egypt's Walid Mohamed (2) attempts to block during the 2nd leg of the men's World Cup volleyball championship at Chiba Port Arena in Chiba, east of Tokyo Thursday. Brazil beat Egypt 3-0 (Reuters photo)

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Klinsmann turns out for Madame Tussaud's

MUNICH, Germany (AFP) — German international Jürgen Klinsmann came face to face with his waxwork double here on Thursday, as the British museum Madame Tussaud's unveiled their version of the former Spurs hero. Klinsmann, who will appear in wax in London during December, commented: "The resemblance is there." The model was revealed at the Olympic Stadium, here, home of Klinsmann's new club, Bayern Munich. The striker lines up alongside compatriots Ludwig van Beethoven, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Boris Becker in Madame Tussaud's celebrated hall of fame. Museum officials said Klinsmann was only the second footballer in their collection, after England midfielder Paul Gascoigne.

Batistuta penalty sinks Palermo

FLORENCE, Italy (R) — A second-half penalty by Argentine Gabriel Batistuta gave Fiorentina a 1-0 win over second division Palermo in the first leg of their Italian Cup quarter-final on Thursday. Palermo, who beat Serie A sides Parma 3-0 and Vicenza 1-0 to reach the last eight, looked capable of another upset until a foul on defender Michele Serena in the 50th minute set up the spot kick. The Sicilians were lucky not to go further behind as Batistuta and Portugal midfielder Rui Costa went close several times.

American indoor to start Jan. 12

NEW YORK (AP) — The nine-meet North American Mobil Indoor Grand Prix will begin its 15th season Jan. 12 at Hamilton, Ontario, with the Hamilton Spectator Indoor Games and conclude with the U.S. Indoor Championships March 2 at Atlanta. The remainder of the schedule, announced Thursday, will be the K of C Saskatchewan Indoor Games Jan. 14 at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; the Montreal Athletics Grand Prix Jan. 19 at Montreal; the Commonwealth Invitational Jan. 20 at Cambridge, Massachusetts; the Usair Invitational Jan. 27 at Johnson City, Tennessee; the Millrose Games Feb. 2 at New York; the Reno Games Feb. 9 at Reno, Nevada, and the Mobil Invitational Feb. 24 at Fairfax, Virginia. The Grand Prix will carry \$300,000 in prize awards.

Barcelona keeper out for 2 months

MADRID (R) — Barcelona goalkeeper Carlos Busquets had surgery on a knee injury and will be out action for two months after pulling up at the start of training on Thursday. Busquets is the 13th Barcelona player to be injured with the season just one-third old. The injury to Busquets — who missed the league game at Tenerife earlier in the season after burning his hands in a household accident with a hot iron —

means that reserve keeper Julen Lopetegui will get a chance to prove himself to manager Johan Cruyff. Lopetegui was passed over for the Tenerife game in favour of Jesus Angoy, Cruyff's son-in-law, leading to rumours that he may seek to leave Barcelona. Ut Angoy has missed training this week because of a bout of flu that has affected four other squad members and deputy coach Carlos Rexach.

Madrid squeeze win over Cibona

MADRID (R) — Defending European champions Real Madrid narrowly beat Croatia's Cibona Zagreb 81-78 in their European championship Group B match on Thursday. Real, handicapped by the continued absence of Mike Smith, badly needed to restore morale after losing to Barcelona in the European Championship and to Caerleon in the Spanish League. The Croatians, led by Veljko Masic, lagged in the first half but improved dramatically in defence and attack in the second. Three points for Cibona from Vladan Alanovic with three minutes to go put them just three points behind, but they failed to get closer.

Eyles qualifies for Qatar final

DOHA (AFP) — Australia's Rodney Eyles lived up to his number two world ranking by qualifying for the final of the Qatar International Squash Championship with a win over compatriot Brett Martin here on Friday. The semi-final, lasting 62 minutes, was a thriller because it was closely-contested and had spectacular rallies. Those rallies that were short were finished off with exotic shots, played deftly and with imagination. Although competition was keen, the match was played in excellent spirit and with both rivals moving superbly on court, leters were down to a minimum. The crowd, often brought to its feet by the Australians' dazzling display, groaned with disappointment when Martin failed to stretch the match to a fifth game.

IOC on the Internet

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AFP) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is now on the Internet computer communication system. Anyone connected to the net can find out current Olympic news and information on activities within the Olympic movement.

Romanian player for Liege

BUCHAREST (AFP) — Romania's Gheorghe Butoiu has been transferred from Farul Constanta to Belgian club Standard Liege on a four-month contract. The \$65,000 deal of Butoiu — one of the best strikers in the Romanian first division — could be extended if he does well.

Thai Farmers dig deep to find victory in Asian Club Championship

BANDUNG, Indonesia (AFP) — Title-holders Thai Farmers Bank were made to fight for their place in the semi-finals of the Asian Club Championship by hosts Persib Bandung.

The Bangkok side were in danger of losing the second spot in the quarter final league, behind Iwra Chinnma of South Korea, until Soujja Sirikeat hit home a late penalty to give them a 2-1 win over the Indonesian side.

Iwra beat Verdy Kawasaki of Japan 1-0, in the second match Thursday evening, to dump the two-time J-League champions out of the 1995 tournament.

The Thais went a goal ahead in the first half through Theerayut Pienprasop. But the Indonesian champions, without four regular players through injury and suspension, went level on hour when Yudi Guntara shot in off the right post.

Had the score remained level Thai Farmer would have lost their place to Verdy, despite the Japanese side's defeat.

But the Thai team's cap-

tain hit home the 72nd minute penalty after substitute winger Surapomachai Pungagaboon was brought down in the area.

Thai Farmers Bank victory sent them through as runners-up with five points from three games.

Iwra's victory, their second in the tournament, kept alive their hopes of becoming the second South Korean side to win Asia's top club title. Royals won it in 1985.

The only goal of a low-key match against their Japanese rivals came in the 56th minute when Park Num Yoo collected Hwang Yoo Suck's knock-down to beat the Verdy keeper with a low shot.

Verdy coach Rubens Fattato Filho altered his defensive formation to push for the equaliser. But his gamble failed and the Japanese were left to rely on Persib denying the Thais victory in the next game.

Verdy finished third with a win, a draw and loss. Persib finished bottom of the round robin event having lost all three games.

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Interested applicants should call 649662 to set appointments for interviews.

Seizinger wins training run at Lake Louise

LAKE LOUISE, Alberta (AP) — Olympic champion Katja Seizinger of Germany showed she collected no rust over the summer by winning Thursday's first training run for this weekend's opening women's downhill race of the World Cup season.

Seizinger was timed in 1 minute, 27.45 seconds over the 1.44-mile men's Olympic downhill course on Whitehorn Mountain.

Austria's Alexandra Meissnitzer was second in 1:27.83, just 0.01 ahead of German Veteran Michaela Gerg-Leitner.

American Picabo Street, the defending World Cup downhill champion who won the first race of her career at this Rocky Mountain resort last year, was sixth in 1:28.06.

Lindsey Roberts was the top Canadian, finishing 21st in the field of 62 starters in 1:29.09. Kate Pace Lindsay, attacking her first downhill course since injuring her knee three weeks ago, was 37th in 1:30.52.

The downhill race is scheduled Saturday and a super-G Sunday.

Workers spent the morning removing a blanket of soft snow. Wind blew at the top of the course and falling snow made visibility difficult for some of the late starters.

Seizinger, 23, said the course was soft and lacked jumps.

"There's only one turn with hard conditions," she said. "At the top it's very soft and at the bottom very broken."

Street, 24, said the course will become faster if temperatures fall, but agreed she'd like to see more jumps.

"The jumps are not because of how much snow we have," she said. "The jumps are what make a course really exciting for U.S. running it and people watching it. They add an element of anxiety to the course that is not really there. The speed is not something that moves us anymore. The air is what's exciting."

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSH
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BOTH ROADS LEAD TO ROME

Neither vulnerable. North deals. NORTH 7552 057 0A J 4 4J863 WEST 441044 0553 0E76 472 EAST 4E OAK 04042 05532 44 SOUTH 4A98 0J 0J 0109 4A R Q 1085

The bidding: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST Pass Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠. A cursory analysis might make it appear that West got off to a disastrous lead on this deal from a team-of-four match. But the play in the other room proved that it made no difference at all, thanks to a little help from the defense. East's four-heart opening preempt was a reasonable choice, but South was just too good to be shot out. Five clubs became the final contract in both rooms. Where West led the queen of spades and East produced the king, declarer captured with the ace, drew trumps in two rounds and then cleared the diamond suit with the help of a finesse. Declarer then exited with the jack of hearts and, because of the fortunate distribution of the heart spots, East was endplayed. A high heart was continued, on which declarer discarded a spade instead of ruffing. On the forced red-suit continuation, declarer was able to discard the remaining spade loser while trumping in dummy, and so lost only two heart tricks. At the other table West dutifully led a heart. East won the queen and played another round of the suit for declarer to ruff. It might now seem that the contract must go down to defeat, but declarer found a way out of the predicament. The only legitimate chance was to find East with a bare king of spades. Declarer drew trumps and cleared diamonds with the help of a finesse, ending in dummy. A spade was led and, when East produced the king, declarer played low from hand. Owing to nothing but red cards, East was forced to yield a ruff-allow, and declarer was home, this time losing one trick in each major suit. Did you spot the defensive lapse? On the second round of trumps East should jettison the king of spades, and no endplay would have been possible.

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Solana set to assume top position at NATO

Alliance ambassadors reach consensus on socialist Spanish minister as Claes successor

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ambassadors agreed Friday to nominate Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana new secretary general of the 16-nation Atlantic alliance, diplomats said.

They said Mr. Solana, 53, would officially be nominated as Willy Claes' successor on Tuesday in Brussels at the bi-annual meeting of NATO foreign ministers.

At their informal meeting the ambassadors "reached a consensus to propose for approval by NATO foreign ministers meeting on Dec. 5 in Brussels the nomination of Mr. Solana as new secretary general of the alliance," the 16 diplomats said.

In Copenhagen, former Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the only candidate to have officially put his name forward for the post vacated since Mr. Claes resigned in October, withdrew his candidacy Friday.

"I have chosen to withdraw my candidacy for the NATO post as it now seems there is general consensus in favour of the Spanish candidate," Mr. Ellemann-Jensen told a news conference in parliament.

"NATO faces the greatest challenge to its history in Bosnia... there has been no secretary-general for six weeks and further delays would weaken the alliance," Mr. Ellemann-Jensen said.

Mr. Ellemann-Jensen was the only declared candidate



Javier Solana

for the vacant post, but although originally favoured by Washington he failed to win European support beyond Nordic cousins Norway and Iceland.

The choice of Mr. Solana was welcomed in several NATO nations Friday, with a Spanish government spokesman saying the minister was "capable of performing the great task of working for security peace and freedom."

London, Bonn, France and Oslo were among the first countries to welcome the proposal to appoint the Spanish minister.

Shortly before Friday's announcement, Mr. Solana himself stressed in Madrid the important roles the Western alliance had to play in Europe, both in implementing peace in Bosnia and in strengthening ties with

other central and eastern European nations.

NATO has "great responsibility for ensuring a definitive peace in Bosnia," Mr. Solana said, referring to the NATO-led operation to implement the Bosnia peace agreement.

His words came as NATO ambassadors authorised earlier Friday the deployment of an advance force of 2,600 non-combat troops in the former Yugoslav republic.

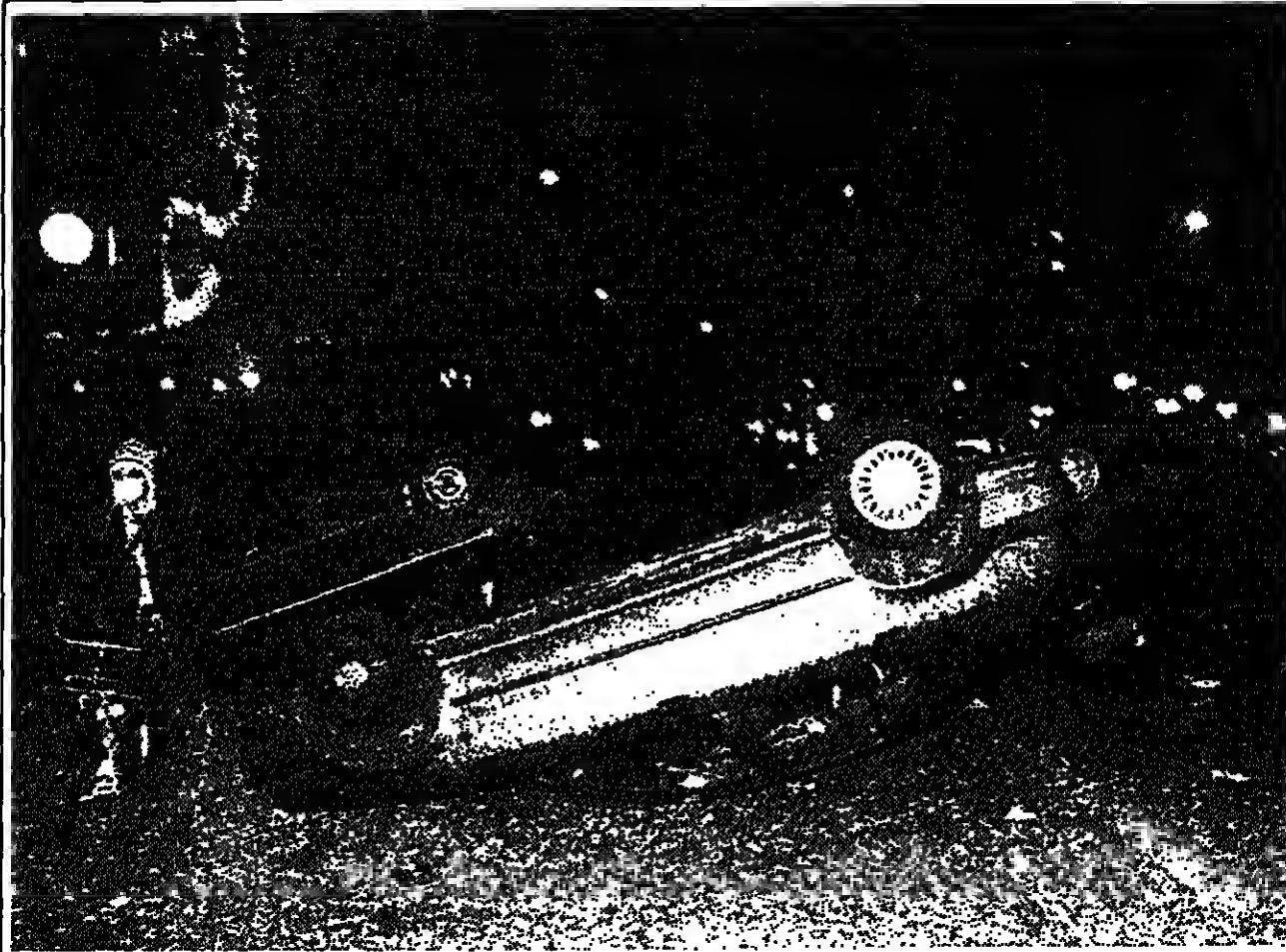
The first 200 troops from this "enabling" force, which will pave the way for the deployment of the 60,000-strong NATO-led force, are set to arrive in Bosnia-Herzegovina Saturday.

The nomination of Mr. Solana to the alliance's top job represents a remarkable turnaround for the popular Socialist politician, who only 13 years ago fervently opposed his country's integration into the Atlantic alliance after the restoration of democracy.

His past and Spain's position in NATO had prompted some alliance ministers, notably German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, to doubt whether he would be an appropriate choice.

But in a first reaction Friday, Mr. Kinkel said Mr. Solana was an "excellent choice" for the top NATO job.

Opposition has also expressed some U.S. congressmen angered by his opposition to U.S. sanctions against Cuba.



RIOTS AND HOOLIGANISM: A cyclist thread this way between overturned cars in front of the University of Jussieu, where 2,300 hooligans, after a student demonstration dispersed, set fire to kiosks and destroyed telephone booths. Then they went to the university and started a blaze (AFP photo)

45% of Israelis favour Golan pullout

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Forty-five percent of Israelis would support a pledge to withdraw from the Golan Heights to help restart stalled peace talks with Syria, according to an opinion poll published Friday.

The survey by the daily Yediot Aharanot asked: "Should Israel announce it is ready to completely withdraw from the Golan Heights in exchange for peace with satisfactory security arrangements, to reach a breakthrough with Damascus?"

Forty-five per cent said "yes," 50 per cent said "No" and five per cent had no opinion.

Although the number who oppose a complete withdrawal is still higher, the percentage of supporters has increased from previous polls.

The survey was conducted by the Dahaf Institute among 605 Israelis, with a four-per cent margin of error.

Peace talks between Syria and Israel ground to a halt in June because of differences over security arrangements on the strategic Golan.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres said Friday there should be several avenues of peace negotiations with Syria and that he would respect his slain predecessor's commitment to keeping Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories.

"The avenue of negotiations with the Syrians at the ambassador level has been imposed on us by the Syrians," Mr. Peres told the Israeli newspaper Maariv.

"It is necessary to open at least a second one, because to negotiate, you need several avenues."

U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross is expected in the region next week to shuttle between Syria and Israel to try to jumpstart peace talks that

have been stalled for several months.

Mr. Peres is to go to Washington on Dec. 11, after meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and probably with King Hussein and Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat.

In the interview, Mr. Peres also said he would respect the pledge by his predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin, assassinated on Nov. 4, not to dismantle any Jewish settlements in Palestinian territories for the time being.

This particularly concerns the small Jewish settlement of Netzarim in the middle of the autonomous Gaza Strip, which Peres wanted to remove while he was foreign minister.

"I will achieve everything that Yitzhak Rabin committed to doing. Even in areas where there were differences between us, I will act as if he was still alive," Mr. Peres

said. "I was in favour of removing Netzarim, but Rabin opposed it. He was assassinated, but his spirit is still here," he said.

The new prime minister also reaffirmed Israel's demand that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) charter be amended to remove sections that call for the destruction of Israel.

"If two months after Palestinian elections, scheduled for Jan. 20, these clauses are not removed, the peace train will stop. I told Arafat this," he said.

"In May, we are to begin negotiations for the final status of the (Palestinian) territories. We have three years to negotiate, from 1996 to 1999. We will respect all our commitments," Peres said.

"The Palestinians have to do the same, this means to fight terrorism and change their charter."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel, Russia sign military deal

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev signed a letter of intent here on Friday boosting their countries' military cooperation, the Israeli defence ministry announced. The Russian news agency ITAR-TASS said the deal covered an expansion of military and technical cooperation, after an agreement already signed in Moscow in April 1994. Israel is interested in selling arms to third countries jointly with Russia, it said. Mr. Peres briefed Mr. Grachev, the first defence minister to visit the Jewish state, on the Middle East peace process, which Russia co-sponsors with the United States. He also hailed the progress in relations since they were renewed in 1991. Mr. Grachev, whose visit runs until Tuesday, is to visit military bases and enterprises, including Israel Aircraft Industries. He will also meet Chief-of-Staff General Amnon Shahak.

37 PKK rebels killed — Iraqi Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — Thirty-seven Turkish Kurd rebels from the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) have died in fighting with rivals in northern Iraq since Wednesday, the official Turkish news agency Anatolia reported Friday. The agency, citing the radio of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), said the PKK guerrillas died in clashes with KDP fighters in the Berazgir, Hayat, Dasta Hirk and Gervaya Halat areas of northern Iraq. The figures given by Anatolia took the number of PKK fighters killed in northern Iraq to 76 since November 22. The PKK, which has been fighting to set up a Kurdish homeland in southeast Turkey since 1984 in a conflict that has left 20,000 dead, has set up rear bases in northern Iraq. The area has been controlled by Iraqi Kurd factions since the 1991 Gulf war, in defiance of Baghdad.

Saudi clerics ban lotteries

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's highest religious authority, the Council of Ulama, banned private lotteries on Friday, arguing that they were games of chance prohibited by Islam. The council, chaired by the kingdom's mufti, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ben Abdullah Ben Baz, accused lottery companies of tricking and manipulating people. "Anyone who buys a lottery ticket spends money taking a risk and doesn't know if he will get anything in return. So it is a game of chance prohibited by religion," the council said in a religious edict. The council, whose decision will now become law, cited three lottery firms selling tickets in the kingdom and offering prizes of luxury cars worth up to \$25,000.

Turkish poll contender killed in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (R) — A parliamentary candidate from Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's conservative party was killed and burned in his car in Istanbul on Thursday night, the Anatolian news agency said on Friday. Anatolian said Ismail Yener Kaya, an Istanbul candidate for Ms. Ciller's True Path Party (DYP) in Dec. 24 general elections, had probably been killed before having his hands and legs handcuffed to his car and set ablaze in Istanbul's working-class Bagliclar district. His charred body was recovered by an Istanbul fire brigade. The identity of his killers or the reason for his death were not immediately clear. Anatolian quoted police as saying an empty pistol was found in Kaya's car, but that there were no signs of bullet wounds. They were conducting wide-ranging inquiries, it said.

37 injured in bomb threat on Kuwaiti plane

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Nearly 40 people were injured while scrambling out of a Kuwait Airways plane at an airport in southern India on Friday after a passenger claimed he had a bomb in his briefcase, an Indian news agency said. The Press Trust of India (PTI) said a passenger approached the captain 20 minutes before the aircraft was scheduled to land in the Kerala state town of Thiruvananthapuram and said a bomb in his briefcase would go off in minutes. The captain radioed the control tower to prepare for an emergency landing, the news agency said. Fire tenders and a bomb disposal squad were standing by on the tarmac when the Airbus arrived and parked on an apron.

Kabul airport bombed

KABUL (AFP) — Jet planes dropped two bombs on Kabul airport Friday, damaging the runway but causing no major casualties in the third air raid on the besieged Afghan capital in two weeks, army sources said.

Two bombers struck at 9:00 a.m. (0430 GMT), shattered the calm that usually dominates a Friday morning, the only non-working day of the week in the country.

The jets released two bombs which hit the runway of Kabul airport, which has been closed to air traffic since October when it came under fire from the Taliban militia who are blockading the city, airport guards said.

Only one minor casualty was reported after the bombing run, doctors said. A woman in a suburb several kilometres from the airport was treated in a city hospital for a wound, possibly caused by part of a falling anti-aircraft shell or stray shrapnel.

No information over who carried out the raid was immediately available. But the Taliban said it carried out the last two bombings of the city, which killed at least 49 civilians.

The last bombardment of five residential areas of the war-ravaged capital on Sunday, killed at least 41 civilians — including 13 children — and injured more than 140 others.

The Taliban said they had dropped some of the bombs which hit the city, but claimed that the explosives hit military targets.

The militia have vowed to seize Kabul and to oust the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

The extent of the damage of the airport, which has been closed to air traffic for more than two months, was not immediately known but local merchants said they saw two explosions inside the airport grounds.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, the United Nations and the Afghan national airline, Ariana, have moved their air operations to the Bagram military air base about 100 kilometres north of Kabul when the Taliban began firing rockets at the runway as part of their recent assault on the capital.

Before Friday's attack, the runway had escaped serious damage.

The mainly ethnic Pashtun Taliban remain entrenched in hills south and southwest of the city as winter sets in.

Woman suspect in Rabin killing freed

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — A young woman suspected of helping to assassinate Yitzhak Rabin was released on Friday and placed under house arrest for seven days, a police spokesman said.

Margalit Har-Shefi, a 20-year-old law student, was described by police as a dominant member of the group that wanted to kill the Israeli leader, assassinated on Nov. 4 at a Tel Aviv peace rally by a religious Jew. She denied the accusation.

A resident of Beit El Jewish settlement in the West Bank, Har-Shefi was, like confessed assassin Yigal Amir, a law student at Bar Ilan University near Tel Aviv. Seven other religious Jews in their 20s were also arrested.

Har-Shefi was arrested on Nov. 15, 11 days after the prime minister's assassination.

Her passport was confiscated by police and she is prohibited from having contacts with individuals sus-

pected in the assassination, and with journalists, said police spokesman Eric Bar Chen.

After her house arrest, she will have to report to police each day and cannot leave her home at night, he said.

Three people remain behind bars in connection with Mr. Rabin's murder, including confessed assassin Yigal Amir, his brother and another suspected accomplice. Amir and his brother Hagai, who is suspected of helping plan the assassination, are expected to be formally charged next week.

A joyful reception is being prepared for Har-Shefi on Friday in the Jewish settlement of Beit El, near Ramallah, where she lives with her parents, people at the settlement told AFP.

According to investigators, the young woman provided information about weapons stored at Beit El to help Amir and she stole arms and ammunition.

(Continued on page 7)

Papandreou 'stable' on life-support gear

ATHENS (Agencies) — Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou was stable in hospital on Friday and still hooked up to life-support systems for his failing lungs and kidneys, the latest medical bulletin said.

"In the last 24 hours his respiratory and kidney functions are stable and he is still hooked up to a respirator and kidney machine," hospital spokesman Gregory Skalkeas told reporters.

The Greeks have been in a state of suspended animation over the past 12 days, following each laboured breath of its premier in his battle against pneumonia which has been complicated by kidney problems.

As the anxious waiting went on Friday the country was torn between anxiety and sentiment as it pondered the end of a political era.

Mr. Papandreou's cabinet and the rest of his PASOK party appeared to have given up any pretence that Greece's political colossus is about to make yet another

political comeback, and were preparing the ground for succession.

A team of up to 20 doctors and specialists were meeting early Friday to try to determine if Mr. Papandreou was well enough to be taken off the respirator through which the prime minister has been breathing since Tuesday night.

Mr. Papandreou was originally put on a respirator soon after he was admitted to the Onassis heart clinic here suffering from pneumonia. He was taken off temporarily on Saturday, but it was on again just 24 hours later as water settled in his lungs, and the 76-year-old statesman developed kidney problems, for which he since been receiving regular dialysis.

However, up to now, doctors say his heart and brain have continued to function normally. Mr. Papandreou had a triple heart-bypass operation in 1988.

But the memo in suits on the

(Continued on page 7)

Former Turkish premier seeks his old job

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey's main opposition leader kicked off his election campaign on Friday with promises to strengthen the economy and reform the political arena, as a fresh challenge was mounted to the Dec. 24 poll date.

"Turkey today is in an economic and political crisis and these must be solved simultaneously," Mesut Yilmaz, head of the conservative Motherland Party (ANAP), told a crowd of party activists.

"In politics, we must show understanding, honesty and action. In the economy, there must be change and new plans."

Before his remarks to supporters gathered in the chandelier-lit ballroom of the five-star Conrad Hotel, a video flashed pictures of poverty to the background of screeching music and sound of shattering glass.

ANAP, out of power since 1991, is seen as a serious

threat to Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's True Path Party (DYP). Both are competing for votes among Turkey's rising urban middle class.

The start of ANAP's campaign coincided with a decision by the parliamentary speaker to hold a special session on Monday to discuss a motion for postponing the poll.

Political analysts say the challenge by more than 90 rebel deputies will probably fail because it is unlikely that the required 150 deputies will turn up on Monday.

Mr. Yilmaz, 47, who was premier for five months in 1991 before losing to DYP, said parties usually forgot about their ouster campaign promises once they were elected.

"Everyone says the same thing about infrastructure, expanding local power, but none of them say how they will do this. 'We will say,' he said.

His programme picked up

on changes instituted by ANAP during its eight years in power after winning the 1983 elections that ended three years of military rule.

Under the late President Turgut Ozal, who founded and led the party as prime minister until 1989, the party forged ahead with liberalising Turkey's economy, strengthening ties with the West and building up the country's infrastructure.

Mr. Yilmaz, who had a stormy relationship with Mr. Ozal in the latter's final years, invoked the successes of the Ozal period when he promised his party would institute financial, budgetary, social security and legal reform.

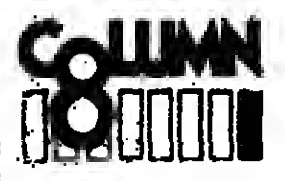
He said it was time people in Turkey felt they had a government working for them rather against them — addressing the unease Turks have expressed with a government system seen as top-heavy and unconcerned with the daily life of people.

Mr. Yilmaz, who during parliamentary debate this year opposed lifting restrictions on freedom of expression, said he wanted to see all obstacles removed.

His party programme — emblazoned with ANAP's election slogan "We Will Do This Job" — uses softer words to state a mainstream approach to the country's Kurdish issue.

ANAP says it would lift emergency rule in the south-east — where separatist Kurdish rebels are battling for autonomy or independence — and promises to review the much criticised government-financed Kurdish militia.

"In the southeast we will show a new approach. The southeast problem is not a problem of Turkey, it is a Turkish problem," he said. During its time in opposition ANAP failed to produce any clear alternative to the government's hardline policies on the fight against the 11-year-old Kurdish insurgency.



Clinton quotes James Bond to assess British ties

LONDON (R) — President Bill Clinton Wednesday night turned to one of his "very favourite" British citizens to describe the Anglo-American bond — James Bond. During a toast at a dinner hosted by Prime Minister John Major, Mr. Clinton asked permission to "paraphrase one of my very favourite British citizens, 007, our relationship can never be stirred nor shaken. It will always be there. It will always be strong," he said. Ian Fleming's fictional British intelligence agent was noted, among other things, for his insistence that martinis "should always be stirred, not shaken." The dinner was held at 10 Downing Street, the prime minister's official residence in London.

Aristide to get married

PORT-AU-PRINCE (AFP) — Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide told reporters Thursday that he will be marrying, but did not reveal the identity of his future wife. Asked about rumours that he was preparing to tie the knot, Mr. Aristide said in Creole: "I am not able to say 'no', concerning the date I still do not have it but when I do, I will tell you." Persistent rumours have passed around the capital mentioning the name of Mildred Trouillot, a Haitian-American jurist who worked with Mr. Aristide during his exile in Washington.

Queen Elizabeth attends Catholic service

LONDON (R) — Queen Elizabeth, head of the Church of England, became the first British monarch in 400 years to attend a Roman Catholic service in her own country when she was welcomed to Westminster cathedral. The queen attended vespers to mark the 100th anniversary of the cathedral, the most important church for Roman Catholics in England. Protestant Anglicanism is Britain's state religion.

Heston takes cybertour to promised land

HOLLYWOOD (R) — his days of playing Moses are over but veteran actor Charlton Heston is still leading people to the promised land — via cyberspace. Heston has become the first major celebrity to appear in a CD-ROM — "Charlton Heston's Voyage Through The Bible." He tells the stories of the creation, Cain and Abel and the exodus. The CD-ROM includes music and art of the period, maps of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Judea and original Bible text. "That's what I like, being the first out of the gate," Heston said in an interview. "It's refreshing, like being in the first talking picture or first colour movie."

Ivana Trump marries Italian businessman

NEW YORK (R) — Ivana Trump, former wife of U.S. real estate developer Donald Trump, married Italian businessman Ricardo Mazzucchelli Wednesday night in a private ceremony at a posh Manhattan restaurant. The 46-year-old bride and 51-year-old groom, who have lived together for five years, told photographers at a photo session that they would honeymoon in Aspen, Colorado.